

Tension and Release: Exploring the role of Music in the Daily Life of a Men's Local Prison

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Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Declaration of Authorship

I, Chris Waller, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others this is always clearly stated.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Waller', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chris Waller

March 2020

Dedicated to the Memory of Dr Richard Smith

Acknowledgements

I want to thank my supervisors Serena Wright, David Denney and Richard Smith first and foremost. Serena, the moment you joined my supervisory team in my second year was a pivotal moment for me and without your kindness, intellect, and humour I would not have gotten as far as gaining access to a prison let alone sitting here writing my acknowledgements. You've been a reassuring voice in the hard times and an enthusiastic one in the good times and have somehow managed to hit the supervisory sweet spot between friend and inspiration.

David, thanks for the confidence that you put in me throughout my time as your student and supervisee, your warmth and guidance are deeply appreciated. I have missed the conspiratorial flavour of our supervisions and thank you for your care and hard work. You and Richard were the reason that I felt able to undertake this journey and I feel lucky to have been supervised by my favourite tutors.

Richard, you were always immensely generous with your time and knowledge and I am sad that I won't be able to sit in your office and chat with you about politics, bands and cultural theory anymore. Talking with you taught me more about the contingency of the world than any of the books you pulled off your straining shelves to lend me and I think it is your attitude which Jane, thank you for your help over the last months. Your feedback, encouragement and general presence have helped me with the turbulence.

Morwenna, you've been a great friend, colleague, cautionary tale and success story to me over the years and I can't thank you enough for your support, advice, and encouragement. You've helped me through some shaky moments and have provided space to laugh, work, and consider the implications of our awkward behaviours. Thanks mate.

Chloë, you joined later on in the process but quickly became indispensable. Your patience, and encouragement has been invaluable, and you have made me feel 'held' throughout. Thank you for giving so much of your time and thought to the thesis; to thinking parts out with me, to

reassuring me that it was going to work out and to telling me that I'm clever when I didn't feel like it. I hope you'll stick around for the next project.

To my father Adrian, you have a longer track record of helping me out than anyone on this list and I'm very grateful to you for that. Thank you for your advice and care, and for offering me a safe place to come back to when I got stuck. Your guidance over the years has helped me to orient myself around this project in a way where it might get done, rather than half-done. Thank you.

Many thanks to David Manlow, you've been supportive, generous and extremely accommodating and I'm looking forward to that jam and a beer now finally. Thanks to Enis and Sam for their expertise in the last throws of submission, and to my friends for the part you've played in keeping me laughing and on track in various ways. To Alex, Anita, Charlotte, Jon, Marie, Nicola and many others at Westminster and Royal Holloway thanks for your kindness over the years.

Finally, thanks to my respondents and facilitators at HMP South Hill who shared their views and experiences with me. Revisiting the conversations, we had has made me laugh and cry all over again and I thank you deeply for your generosity of mind and spirit.

Abstract

This thesis is about the ways that prisoners and staff in a category B local prison used music to manage the various pains and insecurities that characterise the experience of imprisonment in late modernity. Based on nine months of quasi-ethnographic study, the thesis explores the way in which music is constituted in the daily life of the prison by investigating the situated practices of prisoners and staff. This is an exploratory study which seeks to account for the lack of research exploring the topic of music within this area of prison life. Existing research has tended to focus on the therapeutic and rehabilitative capabilities of music in carceral settings and has thus overlooked the social and cultural dimensions of music in the daily life.

Drawing on the work of DeNora (2000, 2013) this thesis examines how music intersects with various aspects of daily life including its sensory, affective, and institutional dimensions, in addition to the social and cultural life of the prison. In conditions of profound and persistent uncertainty which characterise local prisons, this thesis highlights the ways that music is used to create forms of stability (and contrast) across various dimensions of daily life.

Abbreviations

ANT – Actor-Network Theory

BME – Black and Minority Ethnic

CM – Custody Manager

HMPPS – Her Majesty's Prisons and Probation Service

IEP – Incentives and Earned Privileges

IPP – Imprisonment for Public Protection

LSM – Learning and Skills Manager

NPS – New Psychoactive Substances

NRC – National Research Council

VP – Vulnerable Population

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Tension and Release: Exploring the Role of Music in a Men's Local Prison

Chapter One – Introduction

The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten with rods. After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. When he received these orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks. About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose. (Acts 16: 22-25)

1.1 Leadbelly to Solid Air

As the above passage from the New Testament demonstrates, there has long existed an enduring perception of affinity between music and spaces of incarceration, and the image of the captive finding solace in a tune is one that features consistently in representations of the prison. Popular culture in the 20th century drew heavily on the prison in music and films as the backdrop on which to explore the vibrant emergence of youth culture. Elvis Presley's *Jailhouse Rock* (1957) and Johnny Cash's *Live at Folsom Prison* (1968) represent lasting cultural statements wherein music and confinement are placed in relation to each other. Further back, John and Alan Lomax's recordings of work songs from the penitentiaries of the American south provide a window on the era of slavery in melancholy beauty, as prisoners re-enacted the steady 'call and response'-style chants that accompanied enslaved people through the torturous journey over the Atlantic middle passage and into the plantations and barracoons. This relation between music and the experience of

confinement perhaps derives most fundamentally from the capacity of human bodies to make rhythms, melodies, and even harmonies, creating soothing patterns of sound and feeling in austere environments. However, this relationship cannot be understood as a simple dialectic between freedom and constraint.

For enslaved people, music provided forms of agency with which to resist the brutal suppression of the slave ship (Skehan, 2013) and plantation (Epstein, 1977), but was also mobilised as a means of subjectification, justifying their continued subjection by slave owners. As Thompson (2014) shows, enslaved people were forced to dance and sing for their captors and these displays were portrayed as signs of contentment among the enslaved population. Slave owners would use these scenes to portray a natural order in which the keeping of slaves protected them from harm which they might encounter if let free. The music of enslaved people was furthermore used as a way of portraying this group as intellectually inferior, and the harmonically complex music of Europe was contrasted against the music brought from Africa (White & White, 1999). Here music was characterised as reflection of the subjective composition of the captives and though, White & White (1999) argue, the music illustrated sophisticated antiphony and rhythmic construction, the emphasis on harmony within western music served to articulate the primitive nature of the slave's music and, in doing so, the enslaved people themselves.

It was this music that entranced Alan Lomax when he visited the segregated penitentiaries of the south in the 1930's and in which he saw the expression of a pure and distinctly 'American' experience (Jackson, 1972; Filene, 1991). Lomax perceived the carceral work songs as a direct link to the songs of the plantations, which had been preserved through the isolating and segregating effect of the prison. As Filene (1991) argues, Lomax is known as an archivist of folklore but often overlooked as a curator with distinct political aims. Lomax's endeavours to record American folk music represented an attempt to articulate a distinctly American culture through documenting and celebrating the musical forms which emerged from its rural areas. When Lomax met Huddie 'Leadbelly' Ledbetter in 1933, he was amazed by the musician's vast repertoire of folk songs and saw within him a link to this undiluted folk culture.

Leadbelly was born on a plantation in Louisiana in 1888 and became a recognised singer and guitarist in the red-light district of Shreveport. He spent much of his early life in and out of prison for various offences but in 1925 he earned a pardon and was released at the earliest date of a seven to thirty-five-year sentence after writing and performing a song to the prison governor.

According to Filene (1991), when Lomax encountered Leadbelly he saw an opportunity in his enormous repertoire and arranged to employ him as their chauffeur when he was released. Leadbelly lived with Lomax and begun to perform across America, playing a selection of folk songs chosen by Lomax to express the image of a pure and primitive American past. To his dismay, Leadbelly was made to wear prison clothing during performances in order to express the authenticity of the performance by recalling the prison as preserved culture. Aside from altering his songs to appear more 'authentic', Lomax attempted to portray Leadbelly as a primitive 'other' who had emerged, uncontaminated, from an imagined past (Filene, 1991). Leadbelly split from Lomax after he refused to allow the performer control over the proceeds of his performances and continued to perform independently till the end of his life and this story articulates part of a continuing relationship between musical performance and the prison in the 20th Century.

The portrayal of Leadbelly as a violent and impulsive criminal is mirrored in Elvis Presley's character of Vince Everett in 'Jailhouse Rock' (1957), whose musical brilliance serves as a symbol of primitive, sexual masculinity as well as a capacity for reform. In the film's famous television studio scene where Vince, dressed in prison clothes performs the film's titular number against a 'Jailhouse' set, the scenario of a musician re-living his past imprisoned identity is redolent of Leadbelly's early performances with Lomax. Throughout the film, Vince's conflicted identity as a former prisoner and a criminal is invoked through his music and it is not until the end where his performance of the soft and sentimental song 'Young and Beautiful' signals the abandonment of this tension between his past and present self.

Like Presley's film, the discourse of redemption that often accompanies the discussion of music in prison can be seen in the history of Johnny Cash's seminal prison concerts in the late 1950's. During his first concert at Folsom Jail, Cash befriended an incarcerated musician called Glen Sherley, who's song 'Greystone Chapel' was performed by Cash on stage. Throughout his career, Cash supported Sherley and the notable musician Merle Haggard, who had both watched him as prisoners in the audience at San Quentin Prison. According to his biographer Michael Streissguth, Cash nurtured a genuine affinity for imprisoned people and a concern for the injustices he perceived within the criminal justice system (Streissguth, 2006, 2017). The concert recordings of Cash at Folsom and San Quentin prisons are electrifying and particularly significant for bringing the voices of prisoners to homes across the world for the first time. However, these concerts are also characterised by the ambivalence that surrounds the relations between prisoner and performer as when performing the song 'Folsom Prison Blues', Cash's famous line "I shot a man in Reno just to watch him die" was edited on the recording and televised footage to include raucous cheers of

approval by the audience (Streissguth, 2006). While accounts pay tribute to the enduring appreciation of Cash's performances by those who witnessed it, others have argued elsewhere (Waller, 2018; Turner, 2013; Jewkes, 2002) that these depictions illustrate the vulnerability of prisoners to dehumanising representations.

The history of prison concerts tends to exhibit this tension between, on one hand, aligning the artist with a space of authenticity defined by its 'outsider' population and, on the other, drawing on the power of music to bind people in collective experiences (Hesmondhalgh, 2013). Les Back's (2015) account of BB King's concerts in Cook County jail provides a convincing example of the latter, describing the violent context of the US prison system in the 1960's and the political unrest that set the backdrop to these performances. Notably, Back describes the transition at Chicago's Cook County jail from the 'Barn Boss' system, in which prisoners were entrusted to control sections of the prison through violence, to the administration of the prison by a team of professionalised prison officers. Taking back control of the prison from the 'Barn Bosses' was a violent process, but Back draws on primary accounts from prison staff which describe how by organising prisoners into bands and putting on concerts, music played an important role in smoothing the transition towards the new system and re-establishing order within the prison. Beyond the instrumental value of these measures, Back (2015:pt2,para 8) illustrates how BB King's concerts offered prisoners a 'sense of human experience' that transcended their suppressed and racialised selves, offering alternative ways of feeling and being in the world from the circumstances they had come to know.

Likewise, Erwin James' (2009) account of John Martyn's performance at HMP Long Lartin in the 1980's portrays a profoundly humanising experience against a backdrop of a different kind. James (2009: para 2) described the high-security prison as "Paranoia City" and his account illustrates the tense atmosphere of prison, punctuated by instances of extreme violence and self-destruction. Martyn's concert came a year after Bonnie Tyler had performed at Long Lartin and this event had left many residents feeling sceptical. According to James (2009), Tyler had come to the prison to record a music video, playing only her newest single 'Breakout'. The prisoners who had attended began to resent being used like props and many requested to be returned to their cells. For this reason, when Martyn and his band came to play a year later as the final show on a 48-date tour of his album 'Solid Air', the residents returned to the prison gymnasium with a sense of wariness. James' account of the song 'May You Never' illustrates the profound effect of Martyn's performance on the audience in terms similar to those described by Back of the audience at Cook County. In contrast to the stilted and repetitive concert a year earlier, James recollected the feeling that Martyn was 'singing directly to each and every one of us'. He continued, '[The lyrics] meant so

much to us, among us the down, the defeated, the betrayed and the betrayers'. 'May you Never' was, James concluded, 'an anthem for relationships, [and] a hymn to friendship and love'; words that he claimed 'could not have been written for a more needy audience' (James, 2009: para 7). This account then evokes the role of music in creating and facilitating a sense of collectively experienced humanity, detached from its constraints and, as for the audience in Cook County, the capacity for music to interrupt patterns of thinking and being.

1.2 Solid Air: The Changing Context

This study is about the power of music to engender the transcendence of one from their personal and physical constraints, but it is also about the complex and difficult work required to engender this. As the above section has sought to show, the history of music in prison is one of ambivalence which resists explanations that render the 'effects of music' in any consistent terms. These examples of the rich and continuous history of performance in places of confinement are utilised as a means of illustrating the ways in which the institution comes to dominate the experience and representation of imprisonment in these intersections with music and musicians. The bookending of Section 1.1. with both the figure of Leadbelly and the song 'Solid Air', which John Martyn started his show with at HMP Long Lartin, illustrate not only the constancy of music within the prison - both in the US and the UK - but also the changing nature of the institution itself over this period.

From the austere and segregated Angola penitentiary of the early 20th century, wherein prisoners were required to undertake constant and strenuous work (Jackson, 1972) to the tense and unpredictable atmospherics of James' (2009) HMP Long Lartin in the 1980's, we see the continuation of a shift in the 'locus of power' expressed upon individuals by the prison, as observed by Foucault (1977). Through the examples given above, we can also see evidence of the transition through Crewe's (2011) tripartite model of the pains of the late modern prison, which speak to the 'depth, weight, and tightness' of the carceral experience. In the first instance, the figure, symbolism, and name of 'Leadbelly' evokes the 'weight' of imprisonment; the extent of its physical and mental arduousness and the severity of its discipline. The 'depth' of imprisonment refers to the perceived distance from freedom and the extra-mural world, and these dimensions characterise the primary experience of imprisonment up until the first half of the 20th century. The concept of 'tightness', constitutes a recent addition to these concepts aimed to capture the shift towards a new

configuration of carceral power. While, as Crewe argues, the Weight and Depth of imprisonment have largely lessened in recent years the tightness of imprisonment – the feelings of ‘tension and anxiety’ deriving from the uncertainty of prison life – has increased. Crewe describes how ‘tightness’ occurs as a result of the increased use of indirect power, characterised by measures of surveillance, evaluation, and control. Power is increasingly experienced as ‘decentralized’ (2011:515) yet present in the regulation of minute aspects of daily life leading prisoners to feel a continual sense of uncertainty that their actions are subject to surveillance and judgement by institutional agents. Power is felt as both ‘firm and soft’ (2011:522) in this arrangement and the anxiety and tension that arise are emblematic of a move towards a focus on the psyche of the prisoner as the point of coercive intervention. The ‘all-encompassing’ nature of this form of power as well as the dual qualities of ‘softness’ and ‘firmness’ are echoed in the concept of ‘solid air’. Martyn’s metaphor of ‘Solid Air’ evokes the image of invisible barriers; individuals separated not by distance but by their own feelings of constraint. While Martyn’s song appears more a reflection on the isolation of mental illness, the metaphor appears apt to describe ‘claustrophobic atmosphere’ (James, 2009) of prisons such as HMP Long Lartin that are characterised by the distinct characteristics of late-modern imprisonment.

To understand how music constitutes such an enduring feature of the prison we must consider the ways in which daily life has changed in prisons over the past century and the context outlined above represents the backdrop of this investigation. More detail will be provided in the following chapter as we look at the empirical work that has sought to study the experience of imprisonment.

1.3 Research on music in prisons: The current scope of the field

As noted in the Abstract, there is surprisingly little empirical research into music as it occurs in prisons that is grounded in the ethnographic or sociological tradition of study; the work of Kate Herrity (2014, 2018), Kjetil Hjørnevik, (2018) and Waller (2018) represent recent exceptions to this broad rule, while Alison Urie and Fergus McNeill’s *Vox Liminis* project (2019) continues to break new ground in forging links between community-based criminal justice work and music. In the main, where music is foregrounded in prison research, it is often presented as part of music-based

interventions – often centred on broadly ‘rehabilitative’ aims - which take the form of organised bands, choirs, workshops, recordings and writing classes, and performances.

Where this work provides important insight into a valuable and growing sector, the orientation of these accounts around formalised music practices does not provide detailed consideration on the role and nature of music in the daily lives of prisoners. This region of the prison is where the vast majority of musical practice occurs and, as the previous section has shown, is it here where the experience of imprisonment is most distinct. Furthermore, as the accounts in section 1.1 of this chapter suggest, understanding music through the frame of well-being and desistance does not capture the complexity of music as it is experienced within the social, sensory, and institution dynamics of the prison. Furthermore, accounts such as those of James (2009) and Back (2018) hint at a more fundamental value that music brings to incarcerated individuals which exceeds the desired outcomes of the criminal justice system (i.e punishment, control, rehabilitation, and other ideological motives). In this way, the thesis orients its focus towards the day-to-day routines and experiences of imprisonment and seeks to explore the benefits and challenges that music engenders in the terms outlined by those who experience the multiple ‘pains of imprisonment’ (Sykes, 1958).

Music is not constructed within this thesis as a means to a rehabilitative end. It is not imbued with any intrinsic capacity to improve well-being amongst prisoners or decrease incidences of violence and self-harm; rather, music within the current study is perceived sociologically and treated as a type of ‘material’ that allows individuals to undertake certain practices, and inhibits others (DeNora, 2000). This approach necessitates a focus on musical practices as they occur within certain situations and environments. Understanding the role of music within prisons requires unravelling the messy and heterogeneous interweaving of strands which make up the pattern of daily life in order to identify what part music plays within the mass of threads. To achieve this, a detailed approach was required, and consequently, the research on which these discussions are grounded is based on a nine-month ethnographic investigation in a men’s local prison in the south of England. Drawing on interviews and observations, this study sought to explore this under-researched area of prison life. Drawing principally on the work of Tia DeNora (2000), music is conceptualised not as a discrete form or agency, but as a meeting point between a range of social, affective, material, and sensory agencies. As such, this investigation has been able to provide empirical accounts of aspects of the experience of imprisonment which rarely arise in the existing research.

In terms of structure, this exploration will proceed as follows: Chapter Two provides a review of existing literature in this area, providing more detail on the theoretical framework of this study and outlining relevant areas of consideration relating to both the prison and to the study of music. Chapter Three details the methodological approach undertaken by the project and describes the research site in more detail. The findings chapters that follow the methodology (Chapters Four through Six) are split into three parts and based broadly around the *material*, *affective*, and *collective* experience of imprisonment. Chapter Four focusses on the experience of confinement and the ways in which prisoners used music in order to cope with cellular confinement for long periods of time. Chapter Five looks in more detail at the use of music in the construction of self and identity, and Chapter Six focusses on the social life of the prison and the ways in which collective practices were constructed using music. This is followed by discussion and concluding thoughts, including reflecting on the contributions made by this study to the field and consideration of future directions for research, in Chapter Seven.

Chapter 2

Conceptualising Music in the Late Modern Prison

Introduction

As the previous chapter described, contemporary research on music in prison tends to be focussed on the capacity of music to produce therapeutic and rehabilitative outcomes for prisoners. While this is a valuable line of investigation, the settings, experiments, and interventions that constitute the empirical focus of these studies overlook the ways in which music contributes to the experience of imprisonment as it occurs outside of these settings. In order to address the shortage of empirical data on this dimension of prison life, the investigation will focus on the daily lives of prisoners and staff. For the purpose of this study, daily life refers to the practices, relationships, and routines that occur within the prison and seeks to place greater emphasis on the *spontaneous* usage of music rather than musical practices that constitute part of a formalised workshop, band, or intervention. This chapter will draw on the existing research relating to this area of enquiry to develop a conceptual approach to the question of music's role within the prison. The following sections will seek to describe some of the key features in the daily life of prisons in England before considering some of the existing research that has investigated the role of music in spaces of confinement. The final part of the chapter will consider the sociology of music, detailing the theoretical approach that will influence the ensuing empirical chapters.

2.1. Characterising the Daily life of the prison

2.1.1 Power within the Institution

Sociologists began to interrogate the daily-lives of prisoners through qualitative research in the late 1950's. Highly influential works such as Goffman's *Asylums* (1961) employed

ethnographic techniques to gain detailed insight into the social lives of prisoners under the unique conditions of the institution. Sykes' (1958) seminal work *The Society of Captives* outlined the 'pains of imprisonment' which he observed in his study at New Jersey State Prison, and these categories of deprivation provided an early framework for describing the daily life of the prison. These determinant features included the deprivation of *liberty, autonomy, heterosexual relationships, security, and goods and services*. Sykes' findings, alongside other important studies such as Clemmer (1958) and Cohen & Taylor (1972), marked a key conceptual shift in the understanding of prisons towards the psychological and existential strains which prisoners were forced to endure. Foucault (1977) describes the rise of the prison in the West as a phenomenon which emerges out of the distinct array of rationalities, ideologies, and discourses that accompany the 'modern' era. One of Foucault's principal aims was to displace the prison from a teleological history of civilisation and reform, which portrayed the prison as a humanistic enterprise that sought to curtail the violence and caprice of previous systems of punishment. Instead, Foucault's account illustrates how the prison came to articulate a broader strategy and rationality of control over specified parts of social life. Alongside the process of 'modernisation' occurring across numerous social institutions around the same time, the prison served "not to punish less, but to punish better...to insert the power to punish more deeply into the social body." (1977:82) The institution of the prison as the primary means of punishment, therefore, is described by Foucault as a move towards a 'rational' system of punishment that was coherent with the political and economic demands of the expanding European nations in the 18th and 19th Centuries. Foucault's (1977) work articulates a distinct shift in the nature of punishment from the infliction of physical pain upon the body of the criminal towards an increasingly indirect form of punishment oriented around the management of subjects.

Ben Crewe (2011) describes this reconfiguration of the disciplinary mechanism in terms of a shift across the 'depth, weight, and tightness' of the experience of imprisonment. Prisons such as those described by early prison sociologists were characterised by their 'weight', referring to the 'severity' of the conditions and the disciplinary mechanisms in place. Likewise, 'depth' articulates qualities of the traditional institution, referring to the sense of distance between the prisoner and their freedom. Both the 'depth' and 'weight' of the prison have receded in the recent years with the shift in disciplinary technique away from coercion based on the threat of physical violence towards coercion seeking to influence the psychology of prisoners such as monitoring, surveillance, and systems of self-government. Crewe's concept of 'tightness' refers to this new configuration of power and seeks to evoke a sense of the 'soft' but 'firm' pressure applied on prisoners by these

new institutional mechanisms (2011:522). While the prison has become 'lighter' in recent years, the sense of certainty about roles, conduct, and relationships between prisoners and staff have given way to conditions of 'tension' and 'anxiety' (*ibid*). Crewe (2011) outlines the pains of *indeterminacy*, *psychological assessment*, and *self-government* which reflect the increasing reliance on forms of surveillance and evaluation to achieve compliance from prisoners.

Accounts such as Goffman's (1961) describe the harsh and degrading use of physical punishment by prison guards in the early half of the 20'th century to ensure compliance amongst the inmate population. Whilst these 'weighty' characteristics were physically arduous, there existed alongside them a clearly defined relationship between prisoner and staff and expectation of conduct. As power has become more 'decentralized' (Crewe, 2011: 515) over the past decades, relations between prison officers and prisoners have become less clearly marked, leading to increased feelings of anxiety amongst prisoners. Paired with the increasing focus on the 'responsibilisation' (Garland, 1996) of prisoners to meet their own rehabilitation needs through active engagement with offending behaviour courses, prisoners increasingly feel that their behaviour is subject to greater scrutiny from a wider range of institutional perspectives. The role of the prison officer thus becomes more complex as it is incorporated within the system of psychological evaluation and surveillance and prisoners are thus required to act in increasingly calculated ways in order to meet the often-contradictory demands of appearing compliant and well-adjusted (Crewe, 2011:519).

As systems of management have become more bureaucratised, daily life has become regulated in ways that exert control over minute features of prisoner's daily life. This regulation can be experienced as profoundly disempowering when the locus of power underpinning the system of forms and applications is absent from view and unaccountable to the concerns of prisoners. Leibling (2006, 2011) suggests that relations between prisoners and staff constitute a fundamental feature of daily life within the prison and these shifts in the mechanisms of carceral power over the past decades have undermined elements of trust that provided stability and security for both groups. The implementation of the Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) system in 1995 illustrates a notable shift further in this direction and can be understood as a mechanism aimed to enforce self-governance. Leibling (2008) outlines the five aims of the policy:

1. to provide that privileges generally are earned by prisoners through good behaviour and performance, and are removable if prisoners fail to maintain

acceptable standards;

2. to encourage responsible behaviour by prisoners;

3. to encourage hard work and other constructive activity by prisoners;

4. to encourage sentenced prisoners' progress through the prison system; and

5. to create a more disciplined, better controlled, and safer environment for prisoners and staff. (2008:30)

As of 2019 (HMPPS, 2019a), new prisoners are placed on 'standard sentencing' when they arrive at the prison and are able to achieve 'enhanced' levels through consistent 'good' behaviour. These levels entitle prisoners to rent a television, increased access to private cash (spends), increased entitlement to visits, access to additional items on the canteen, and extra time out of one's cell for association. Earning 'enhanced' conditions requires prisoners to engage with the regime by undertaking work, education, and offending behaviour courses as well as avoiding any instances of misconduct which may drop an individual to a lower level. Basic sentencing is used as a punishment for bad behaviour and prisoners who incur this sanction are stripped of their entitlements and forced to spend longer hours within their cells (Ministry of Justice, 2011). As Leibling (2008) suggests, despite the desire to further formalise the use of power through the implementation of the IEP system, the functioning of the system relied heavily on relationships built between prisoners and staff and the careful use of discretion in order to ensure the fair application of the rules. The significance of relations between prisoners and staff underlines the complex and negotiated nature of power within the institution and despite the implementation of 'tighter' and more encompassing forms of regulation over the past decades, as Crewe (2007) suggests, power does not only flow in one direction. This shift has thus placed a greater emphasis on the 'psychological pains of imprisonment' (Sykes, 1958; Crewe, 2011) in recent years, characterising key dimensions of prison life including relations between staff and prisoners, the exercise of power, and access to material comforts. The following section continues the discussion of power, turning to the role of drugs within the daily life of the prison.

2.1.2 Resistance, Coping and the Informal Economy

Over the recent decades, the sociology of prisons has been increasingly focussed on the ways in which prisoner's agency, while greatly diminished in numerous ways, comes to be manifested in within the prison through forms of resistance. Disturbances, riots and escapes constitute perhaps the most extreme expressions of prisoner's agency (King in Jewkes, 2012), however as Scott & Codd (1990) suggests forms of resistance can also be perceived in the more subtle and mundane behaviours of prisoners. Forms of resistance are, as Ugelvik (2014:42) argues, as 'diverse' within the prison as 'techniques of power', however, resistance must be considered a distinct type of action from concepts such as coping or adaptation. Ugelvik (*ibid*) suggests that resistance must be understood in relation to power as a response to specific and identifiable measures of constraint. Resistance is thus a constant feature of imprisonment and, as Crewe (2007:257) states, the prevalence of order within the prison often rests 'tenuously' and 'uneasily' on a range of factors. Firstly, as outlined above, coercion constitutes a part of this arrangement with disciplinary systems functioning to 'align' (*ibid*) the interests of prisoners with those of their captors as seen in the example of the IEP system. Secondly, by rendering prisoners dependent on the institution to for accessing basic 'economic needs and desires' (*ibid*) the prison is further able to extract compliance. Thirdly, prisoners may view the 'power arrangement' to be 'legitimate' (*ibid*) based on moral systems and values that they agree with. Finally, prisoners may be resigned to pragmatism or 'dull compulsion' (*ibid*), in some sense accepting the dynamics of their situation as unavoidable. In the case of Crewe's study, the pre-eminence of forms of coercion were mirrored in the covert and 'manipulative' practices of resistance engendered by certain prisoners. Those choosing to resist the institutional arrangements would seek to subvert the systems of surveillance and evaluation by feigning engagement with offending behaviour classes by reproducing the psychological discourse characteristic of rehabilitative interventions. This extended to staff relations where some prisoners would simulate a polite and genial disposition with officers in order to later mock them in private. Censoriousness was also a common feature of resistance and Crewe's respondents described taking satisfaction in reporting officers for rule infringements or not meeting institutional standards (Crewe, 2009). Engagement in the informal economy of the prison provided another avenue for resistance and trade in drugs and other illicit goods allowed prisoners to subvert the material and economic restrictions of the IEP system (Crewe, 2009). While some forms of resistance exerted agency principally through symbolic gestures of dissent, practices such as illicit trade held an

instrumental value for those involved who were able to acquire considerable amounts of money and influence (Crewe, 2006; Walker, 2015).

The importance of drugs within the daily life of the prison has increased significantly since the 1980s where the constitution of the prison population in UK and Wales began to radically shift from the predominantly white, working-class, career criminals to an increasing number of people imprisoned for drug offences from Minority Ethnic backgrounds (Jewkes, 2002; Crewe, 2006). While, as Cohen and Taylor (1972) show, drugs were present in prisons prior to this shift, however, what characterised the profound change in the culture of prison life was the emergence of hard drugs such as Heroin (Crewe, 2006) and more recently new psychoactive substances (NPS) (Walker, 2015). Owing in part to the greatly increased cost of these drugs, Crewe (2006) explains how the increased importance of the drug economy served to fragment the collectively held prisoner identity and the systems of values that underpinned it. As earlier (Clemmer, 1958; Sykes, 1958; Goffman, 1961) accounts of prison life described, the harsh and depriving conditions of imprisonment lead to collective practices and identities which coalesce in the 'inmate code' (Clemmer, 1958; Sykes, 1958). The 'inmate code' outlined practical strategies for coping with the close conditions of confinement and sought to maintain social order by seeking to engender solidarity amongst prisoners and an oppositional attitude toward the institution and its staff. However, as Crewe (2006) suggests, the emergence of hard drugs within the prison service of UK and Wales eclipsed many of these formerly held codes which regulated relations between prisoners and staff. The increased cost of these drugs as well as the higher levels of physical and mental dependency associated with heroin use meant that prisoners were more likely to accrue debts and resort to theft and manipulation in order to acquire them. Crewe (2006) describes how these practices broke down the norms of solidarity between prisoners, radically altering both the social and economic life of the prison. Today much of the violence occurring within the prison system is linked to drugs (Walker, 2015; Home Office, 2017) and efforts to curtail both the supply and demand have met profound challenges. Walker (2015) describes how NPS's such as 'spice' and 'mamba' are increasingly replacing tobacco as the default currency within the informal economy, due to the ease with which these substances can be transported into the prison. Not only are they undetectable by sniffer dogs (Walker, 2015), NPS are clear liquids which can be sprayed onto letters and other objects entering the prison through licit means (Harley, 2017).

While drug use can be read contextually as a form of resistance (Ugelvik, 2014), prisons research has tended to focus on it as part of a range of strategies for coping with the painful experience of imprisonment. Aside from the pronounced effects that shifts within the drug

market have had on the social life of the prison, the prevalence of drugs also helps to illustrate the painful effects of imprisonment. Keene (1997) found that prisoners perceived drugs to have a 'calming' effect on their environment suggesting 'tranquilisers' were seen by prisoners to be particularly effective. Wheatly (in Jewkes 2011:404) draws on Cohen and Taylor's (1972) concept of 'mindscaping' to describe strategies such as drug use which are oriented around altering or escaping the perception of one's immediate environment. Similarly, Cope's (2000) study of drug use amongst young people in custody illustrated how depressant drugs such as heroin and cannabis were particularly sought after by prisoners as these enhance prisoner's capacity to relax, sleep and engage in practices that would allow the time to pass faster. Cope suggests that drugs such as heroin and cannabis are seen as particularly 'compatible' (2000:361) with the experience of imprisonment through their ability to mitigate boredom associated with the long hours spent in confinement.

Underpinning the persistent demand for drugs – as well the characteristics of the drugs most sought after – is the character of the institution and the psychological conditions that prisoners endure as a result of their imprisonment. As Scott and Codd (2010:127) suggest, 'the conscious experience of time' as well as the 'loss of personal autonomy' are amongst the most painful experiences of imprisonment. Wahidin (2004) illustrates the profound feelings of disempowerment experienced as a result of being forced to act in accordance with an imposed 'temporal order' (*ibid*:para 3.1). Wahidin's respondents expressed frustration at being forced to continually wait at each juncture in their daily life, describing how time was experienced as "stasis, stagnant, waiting, yet always in process" (2004: para 6.16). O'Donnell's (2014) work on solitary confinement provides further insight, describing how the perception of time shifts as one enters the prison, making one feel as if the 'present' has become 'stretched' which one's past and future recede in significance. As O'Donnell suggests, prisoners are thus forced to an abundance of time over which they have lost their 'sovereignty'. Moreover, Smith's (Cited in O'Donnell, 2014:18) review of the effects of solitary confinement illustrates both the physical and psychologically harmful character of this practice when applied in its extremes:

1. Physiological: headaches, heart palpitations, muscle pains, digestive problems, diarrhoea.
2. Cognitive: impaired concentration, confusion, memory loss.
3. Perceptual: hallucinations, illusions, paranoia, fantasies.

4. Emotional: depression, anxiety, panic, despair.
5. Motor: lethargy, chronic tiredness, apathy.

(Quoted in O'Donnell, 2014:18)

While solitary confinement is only used as punishment in prisons in England and Wales, prisoners are liable to spend less than six hours out of their cells during the day with those who are unemployed spending up to twenty hours a day locked in their cells (HMIP, 2019). Access to 'purposeful activity' such as work and education ensures that prisoners are able to leave the uncomfortable, stressful and under stimulating environment of their cell for periods of the day and provision of these services has been linked to drug use (Select Committee on Home Affairs, 1999). The rise in the demand for drugs has thus been linked to the need for prisoners to manage the painful experience of cellular confinement and according to the recent annual report by the inspectorate of prisons 24% of prisoners across the estate of England and Wales spent 2 hours a day outside their cells, a figure that rose to 37% in local prisons (HMIP, 2019). As Wahidin (2004: para 6.1) suggests, findings ways to manage the experience of time becomes a matter of 'surviv[ing]' and prison sociologists have long sought to theorise the strategies, identities and stances used by prisoners to mitigate the 'pains of imprisonment' (Sykes, 1958). Goffman (1961:69), for instance, refers to 'removal activities' which seek to hold the prisoner's attention and remove negative sensations and emotions. Removing these negative stimuli allows prisoners to 'kill time' (*ibid*) and resist, to a limited extent, the temporal order of the institution. Toch's (1977) concept of the 'niche' extends the idea of removal activities, describing how 'the stressed inmate' arranges their social and material relations into a 'microcosm' in order to cope with the 'disequilibrium' they encounter on entering the prison (*ibid*:185). This arrangement provides a 'sense of familiarity in the face of threatening novelty', though Toch is keen to emphasise the limitations of these structures, stating "[a niche] rarely guarantees happiness but usually guarantees survival]" (1977:184) In both cases, the authors place emphasis on the collective nature of coping with Goffman providing examples of "field games, dances, orchestra or band playing" (1961:69) as removal activities. Where individual pursuits occur, he suggests, these must rely on 'public materials' such as library books or televisions (*ibid*). Since Goffman, the prison has, as Jewkes (2002) suggests, become increasingly oriented around consumption as private or pseudo-private 'materials' have been introduced into the prison via the IEP scheme. As Knight (2015) argues, the implementation of in-cell television has legitimised the increased use of cellular confinement, allowing institutions to limit the provision of

collective activities and reduce the risk of misconduct. The influx of 'goods and services' (Sykes, 1958) into the prison may have alleviated some of the strains of imprisonment, and complex technologies such as televisions and radios cannot be evaluated in simple terms. However, the role both formal and informal economies within the prison play has a decisive role within the coping practices of prisoners as well as the social and political structure of daily life.

2.1.3 Adaptation, Identity and Emotions

Coping and adaptation are often used to refer to similar practices in prison research and many of the practices outlined in the previous section can be viewed through frame of adaptation. However, where coping is concerned with practices of 'survival' (Crewe et al. 2020) or more spontaneous responses to discomfort, Toch and Adams (1989:254) refer to the 'modification' of the self as an "adjustment to environmental conditions". Early theories of adaptation were based on observations of distinct cultures within the prison in which prisoners were shown to adopt practices and identities in line with the subcultural structures (Sykes, 1958; Clemmer, 1961). Sykes argued that these forms emerged as collective responses to the material and psychological deprivation of imprisonment and the informal economy can be understood in these terms. Sykes identified various 'argot roles' (1958:84) within the inmate subculture that corresponded to behavioural and subjective responses to the universally felt 'pains of imprisonment'. Given the relative stability of prison life and the homogeneity of its population during Sykes' era of prison (Crewe, 2009), adaptive identities were perceived to be relatively stable. However, due to the emergence of the drug market, changes to the demographic of the prisoner population, as well as various shifts within both the social (Crewe, 2006) and institutional (Liebling et al. 1999; Liebling 2008) mechanisms of the power, the collective life of the prison increasingly fragmented. As social structures between prisoners are less dependable, prisoners find themselves increasingly forced to respond to inconsistencies of the regime (Crewe, 2011) as well as the social environment. Ricciardelli et al. (2015) has shown how the absence of trusting social relationships between prisoners increases feelings of insecurity forcing inmates to adopt defensive stances in relation to the often highly transient nature of the social environment. Ricciardelli refers to 'strategic masculinities' as calculated performances constructed by prisoners in relation to the perception of risk, often taking highly gendered forms. Security often underpins these performances, and Jewkes

(2002, 211) describes how being able to convincingly perform the “bodily, gestural and verbal codes” associated with hegemonic masculinity can provide status within the social environment of the prison, allowing prisoners to avoid victimisation. Schmid and Jones (1991) document the ways in which prisoners come to establish ‘prison identities’ separate from their preprison self, describing the adoption of certain attitudes and postures in order to assimilate into the prison culture. Similarly, De Viggiani (2012:226-7) explores the use of ‘front management tactics’ in order to negotiate the often ‘temporary’ and ‘superficial’ social world of the prison.

Sykes’ ‘indigenous model’ of prisoner adaptation was challenged by Irwin and Cressey (1962) who suggested that the cultural life of the prison was determined to a greater extent by individual’s ‘imported’ pre-prison characteristics. Bosworth and Carrabine (2001) explored the ways in which various forms of social or cultural identity came to inflect the ways in which forms of resistance to prison authority came to be expressed, highlighting the complexity and inter-causality of notions of race, gender, and sexuality within the prison. The intersecting nature of identity can also be seen in Jewkes’ (2005) study of working-class cultures in prison. Here Jewkes draws on Irwin (1970) to suggest that forms of criminal behaviour and masculine performance derive from the ‘meanings and definitions’ that are culturally learned from early-age and adapted to the prison environment. The intersectional and performative nature of these identities constitutes an important framework through which to understand the ideas of Gender and Race, particularly given the significance of music to the articulation and performance of identity. While the prison is understood as a distinctly gendered environment it is clear that, like Jewkes’ study of class, the ways in which gender is performed can come to be refracted through race as well.

Phillips’ (2008, 2012) research illustrates how race, regionality, religion, and masculinity served as important cultural texts for determining how prisoners constructed both themselves and others within the prison. Lines of affiliation and distinction between prisoners were often constructed out of various pre-prison identities, however these structures were adaptable in some cases and forms of collective prisoner identity formations could be seen to coexist alongside other pre-prison experiences, cultures, and environments. This is most clearly visible in the context of carceral expansion in the United States which, since the late 1970’s, have imprisoned disproportionately high rates of poor Black and Hispanic citizens from predominantly deprived urban areas (Wacquant, 2001; Alexander, 2010). Wacquant (2010) describes the role of the city, and more specifically its ghettoised areas, as part of an expansive carceral state, providing convincing examples of the convergence between the prison and the inner-city housing estate. The encroachment of surveillance, security and policing as well as the centralisation of basic services,

and cramped architecture of the urban estate serve to illustrate how these areas provide an increasingly similar experience to residents as that of the prison. As Shabazz states, space is a 'central fundament of subject formation' (2009: 277) and the role of the prison as a continuity of certain geographic regions can play a powerful structuring role within the social and cultural life of the prison- as well as the communities from which prisoners derive. The increasingly carceral nature of deprived urban areas thus manifests itself in the ways in which subjects construct themselves, leading to what Shabazz terms 'carcerally inflected Black masculinity' (2009:277).

While these trends are described in a US context, Phillips' (2012) description of black, London youth-culture indicates similar continuities between the experience of urban life and the prison. In the United Kingdom, black and minority ethnic prisoners account for 27% of the prison population which is a significant overrepresentation when compared with the national proportion of 13%. As various studies have shown (Bosworth & Carrabine, 2001; Crewe, 2009; Phillips 2008, 2012), racialised identities constitute an important feature of the UK prison population, determining the ways in which imprisonment is experienced and managed. However, despite being an important feature of both the social and cultural structure of prison life, questions of race and racialisation must be treated with care, acknowledging the presence of various other features which may alter and inflect the outcomes of these agencies.

Returning to the question of adaptation in more theoretical terms, Wright et al. (2017:227-8) paraphrase Crewe's (2009) observation that theories of adaptation tend to be split between '*nouns (types of prisoner)*' and '*verbs (forms of behaviour)*'. In this respect, while Sykes (1958), Clemmer (1958) and Crewe (2009) outline a range of prisoner types, other studies have focussed more on behaviours (Zamble, 1992) and behavioural patterns (Toch and Adams, 1977, 1989). Toch and Adam's study of maladaptation, for instance, investigated prisoners who received repeated infractions and sought to theorise the causes of this behaviour in cognitive terms, pointing to the inability to undertake effective 'problem solving' (1989:70). Despite these differences in focus, contemporary theories of adaptation tend to reject the view that prisoner's adaptive behaviour is based solely on the interior culture of the prison, seeking to incorporate prisoner's imported characteristics as part of the reflexive process by which prisoners make sense of their environment (Crewe et al 2020). Crewe et al. (2020) explore the ways in which sentence length and stage alter adaptive approaches by exploring the distinct conditions associated with long-term imprisonment. Crewe et al. (2020:22) refer to the concept of 'dislocation' to describe the various pains which prisoners encounter when entering the prison and their study of long-term imprisonment identifies three key components. Firstly, the self is torn from the places, objects, practices, and relations from

which it is constituted, forcing the prisoner to adapt to an unfamiliar set of rules and environmental features. Secondly, the prisoner is forced to re-evaluate themselves in relation to their offence. While this is particularly pronounced in the case of murder, Crewe's typology appears to reflect the experience of others imprisoned for less serious offences too. Thirdly, prisoners experience an 'interruption' of their personal narrative and find themselves forced to suddenly re-situate themselves in relation to future, past and present. While the nature of these experiences varies depending on sentence length, stage, as well as the age at which prisoners begin their sentences, these components illustrate how profoundly the self is bound up with the experience of imprisonment.

Crewe (2020) refers to Margaret Archer's (2003) concept of 'fragmented reflexivity' to describe the inability of new entrants to pair their existing value systems and interpretive frameworks to the prison environment. During periods of 'fragmented reflexivity' prisoner's internal conversation is oriented around the expression of their circumstances rather than pursuing any positive alteration of their situation. As Crewe explains further, "rather than acting purposefully in pursuit of a goal, they dwell emotionally on their condition, in ways that, if anything, exacerbate their distress and confusion." (2020:20) By contrast, 'meta-reflexivity' refers to the task of determining how to be in a given situation through the reflexive construction of goals and values that are distinct from previous circumstances. Rather than being principally focussed on the immediate reality of their circumstances, 'meta-reflexives', 'pursue a *modus vivendi* and judge their courses of action according to ideals, values and relatively abstract life projects' (*ibid*: 21). These contrasting states provide a useful framework for considering not only the transition from 'coping' to 'adaptation' amongst the prisoners, but also in considering the relation between self and identity during the profound 'rupture' of imprisonment. Where early stages were associated more with 'survival' and 'coping', middle and later stages involved the establishment of routines, hobbies, principles and durable postures in relation to one's environment.

While the construction of self-identity constitutes an important role in adapting to imprisonment, it is clear that theory must accommodate for the contingency of adaptive identities. As Ricciardelli et al. (2015) show, prisoners are required to 'strategically' adapt to the changing nature of the prison's social and affective life and recent studies have placed greater emphasis on the emotional dynamics of the prison in determining how prisoners respond to their environment.

Goffman's *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1956) presents a theoretical framework for emotion in the form of the 'frontstage' and 'backstage' self. This dramaturgical model

emphasises the interactional nature of emotions, suggesting how certain audiences or situations determine the ways in which individuals express their emotions. While frontstage work may require certain feelings and impulses to be suppressed in order to maintain a consistent performance of self, the backstage allows social actors to behave in a more relaxed and instinctual way, providing a counterbalance to the strain of frontstage performance. For prison researchers, the value of Goffman's work for the theorising the dynamic and contingent nature of emotional relations within the institution has made the dramaturgical model a useful resource. However, with the renewed interest in the emotional life of the prison (Leibling, 1999; Jewkes, 2011) emerging alongside the increase in qualitative and ethnographic prison studies, new findings have begun to question the descriptive value of the 'frontstage-backstage' dichotomy.

Crewe et al. (2013) have argued that the division between frontstage and backstage elides the complexity of the prison's 'emotional geography' and illustrate how public areas such as the education classroom, or workshop can allow forms of backstage work despite being considered as traditionally frontstage areas. Furthermore, while the cell can provide space for backstage work, its qualities as a backstage area depend to a great extent on whether a prisoner is able to achieve privacy within that environment given the likely proximity of other prisoners, officers, and cellmates. Laws and Crewe (2016) extend this argument by exploring the individualised acts of emotional regulation which male prisoners undertake. Applying Gross' (2014) 'process model' of emotion regulation, the authors illustrate a range of practices which enable prisoners to respond and adapt to the emotional challenges of imprisonment. Laws and Crewe's account places emphasis on the emergent quality of the self, outlining further how prisoners come to construct themselves reflexively in relation to their environment. As we have seen, prisoners are forced to adapt to both the social and institutional dynamics of the prison as they begin their sentences and as the previous sections have shown, these structures can be highly dynamic. For many, imprisonment involves the constant management of the self in order to maintain feelings of security and consistency.

2.1.4 Space, Sense and Sounds

In the face of the profound contingency described across the previous sections, the spatial and material features of the prison provide a useful way of considering how certain features of prison life persist in spite of the radically socially determined character of the environment. To understand

these phenomena, Carceral Geographers suggest that attention to the physical qualities of the prison, and moreover, the relation of the physical dimension to the human agents who inhabit it constitutes a valuable frame of investigation.

The question of importation figures in discussions of Carceral Geography and recent work has sought to question the image of the 'total institution' outlined by Goffman (1961) which characterised the prison as remote from society. The assumption that the prison operated in accordance with a largely discrete set of internal logics underpinned many of the indigenous theories of adaptation and as Crewe (2009) suggests, this reflected the demographic composition of prisons in the first half of the 20th century. Baer and Ravneberg (2008) describe how prisons consist of various flows of information, materials, and people between its walls. While walls may function in some configurations to separate people, their ability to contain other agencies is less reliable. In this respect, the research must be able to account for associations and agencies which cross the boundaries of 'inside' and 'outside' the prison. Similarly, Moran and Keinänen (2012) suggest the prison should be seen as a 'permeable' entity with meeting points between inside and outside. Jewkes (2002) work on media practices arrives at similar conclusions about the ways in which television connects prisoners to cultural spaces outside of the prison. Carceral Geography has also affected a shift in the ways in which the prison is conceptualised and Law's (2007:9) description of materials in 'relational' terms is useful in situating this approach:

It is easier to imprison people if there are prison walls while, unlike traffic patrols, sleeping policemen are never off duty (Callon and Latour, 1992). So the first argument is that social arrangements delegated into non bodily physical form tend to hold their shape better than those that simply depend on face-to-face interaction. But note the caveat, 'tend to': everything is a relational effect. Prison walls work better if they are part of a network including guards and penal bureaucracies, while knotted bed-sheets or the sheer passage of time will subvert them. As with Bentham's panopticon, in the end it is the configuration of the web that produces durability. Stability does not inhere in materials themselves. (Laws, 2007:9)

Law's description of the prison as an assemblage of human and non-human agencies draws on Science and Technology Studies and Actor-Network theory (Latour, 2005) approaches and these are helpful for making sense of the prison's materiality. As Foucault (1977) suggests, power is designed into the physical features of the prison and cell doors, gates, observation points and alarms constitute an extension of the capacity of the prison to exert disciplinary power over

prisoners. Hancock & Jewkes (2011:613) note how the grand and austere aesthetics of Victorian prisons sought to express 'sovereign power and retribution', evidencing the discursive and semiotic components of the architecture. The 'drabness' of the interior of the prison, as well as the absence of light, seeks to 'blunt or depress the senses' (2011:616), contributing to the sensory pains of inhabiting the institution. The design of the prison plays a large part in determining the relations of power between staff and prisoner. It achieves this, in part, through the management of sensory information, allowing staff a far greater ability to act and respond within an environment than prisoners. This interaction can be seen in in Cusick's (2006) work on the detainment of terror suspects where detainees are held in soundproofed cells and subjected to loud music as a means of torture. Contrasting the experiences of prisoners in category B and C prisons in the UK with Cusick's account of terrorist detention centres, Rice develops Cusick's concept of 'acoustical agency' to describe ways in which sound enables forms of agency by developing listening practices. "Rather than simply being passively absorbent of unpleasant noise", Rice states, prisoners learn to be "active and resourceful listeners to and interpreters" of the sounds around them (2016:2). Similarly, Hemsworth (2015) extends Crewe's concept of 'emotional geography' describing the ways in which the auditory features of prison life come to order the emotional lives of prisoners. Hemsworth draws on accounts of sound in a Canadian prison, describing how newly arrived prisoners are deprived of their acoustical agency by the loud and intimidating noises of the prison 'soundscape'.

The accounts of the prison's sensory and affective dynamics draw our focus finally to the question of music and the following section will draw further on the work of Hemsworth (2015) and Rice (2016) in presenting the existing research on music in prisons.

2.2 Music in Prison

As stated in the previous chapter the third sector is the principal source of research about music in prisons due to use of music as the basis for a range of prisoner-oriented interventions. At the time of writing the largest providers of music-based interventions in prisons are The Irene Taylor Trust, Good Vibrations, and Changing Tunes. According to their websites, these charities collectively operate in over 30 prisons across the UK, as well as organising sessions for participants in the community as a means of maintaining contact after individuals are released. Greater attention has

been paid to the role of arts-based interventions in recent years due to the successes of this approach in reducing recidivism (NCJAA, 2016) and the UK is well regarded internationally for the scope and impact of its arts-based interventions (Anne Peaker Lecture, 2015).

The recent growth of these organisations is based on the perception that music is an effective way of engaging prisoners and improving levels of desistance post-release; this much is evident through the reports of third-sector organisations providing such services, which often produce evaluations of their interventions to understand and demonstrate the benefits of musical activities for prisoners. For example, a recent evaluation of Changing Tunes - who are described as using 'music teaching, rehearsing, recording, performance, improvisation and composition to promote and support desistance' (Cursely and Maruna 2015), the role of 'self-identity' was a central feature in explaining the impact of the interventions. Here, music was seen to facilitate participants in challenging negative and constraining self-conceptions and helping them to explore new identities more conducive to sustained desistance. Music is described here as a 'medium for self-discovery and self-expression' (*ibid*:40), and this view was persistent in other evaluations. Cox and Gelsthorpe (2008:19) similarly demonstrated how musical group-activities provided by Music in Prisons – who facilitate the composition and recording of music – allowed prisoners to counteract their feelings of de-personalisation. Self-esteem was frequently referred to across the evaluations, with Winder et al.'s (2015) evaluation of Good Vibration's Gamelan percussion courses with people imprisoned for sex offences indicating further the role that practical interaction with music can have in re-negotiating self-image and moving towards a non-offending self.

The dynamics of group activities were often shown to be beneficial to prisoners in improving social skills and social relationships (Cox & Gelsthorpe 2008; Cursely & Maruna 2015; Caulfield 2015). As outlined above, the 'diffidence' (Crewe et al. 2014) characteristic of the prison's social environment lead many to feel lonely and isolated. Music-based interventions are seen as a way of creating connections between prisoners by incentivising them to co-operate and trust each other. Cox and Gelsthorpe (2008:28) describe how the feeling of responsibility to other prisoners engendered by performance brought participants together and formed relationships that went beyond their musical affiliations, into their everyday life on the wings. This outcome is echoed by Cursley & Maruna (2015:20) who identified the sense of 'being part of a collective' engendered by the open environment of the music workshop. Bramwell's (2018) study of rap in a workshop at HMP Coldfield shows how prison rap offers a means by which "the importation and *adaptation* of black vernacular culture to the moral economy of the English penal system [*Italics in Original*]", allowing prisoners to creatively enact values and identities (p. 482).

Music-based interventions have also been demonstrated to produce positive effects with respect to mental health in prisons. For instance, Cox and Gelsthorpe's (2008:20) respondents reported their involvement with musical activities to help reduce anxiety and stress, while in Cursley & Maruna's (2015) evaluation, the therapeutic qualities of the music group were put down in part to the 'alliance' formed between prisoners and the facilitators of the group. As prisoners formed bonds with the facilitators, a greater level of emotional openness and support was achieved throughout the weeks where the workshops ran. Contact with individuals who had been trained to express calm, open, and non-judgemental attitudes with prisoners was seen to be of great benefit to the participants whose everyday interactions with prison officers, psychologists, and other prisoners invoked tighter emotional constraints.

These evaluations provide some insight into the types of challenges which prisoners confront, and it is clear that music occupies a valuable role for many imprisoned people. However, the focus in these accounts on evaluating the effectiveness of these interventions through the frame of well-being and recidivism means that engagement with the dynamics of power, space, and social life within the wider prison are limited. In the situations outlined above, participants enter a formalised space within the prison wherein many of the dynamics outlined above are, to a greater or lesser extent, suspended. As Urie et al. (2019) suggest, this suspension or 'interruption' of the self can provoke valuable outcomes in meetings between outside facilitators and inside participants by allowing relations between participants and their environment to be re-imagined. However, these instances are unrepresentative of the ways in which music is used and experienced for the majority of prisoners across the prison estate of England and Wales. Despite the growing number of music-based interventions and education programmes, the residential areas of the prison remain the most significant location in the musical lives of prisoners. As Herrity (2014) has noted, the official role of music within the late-modern prison constitutes part of the disciplinary mechanism of the prison and Waller (2018) has explored the ways in which musical practices have occurred alongside disciplinary technologies throughout birth of the carceral state in the 19th century. Today, prisoners are able to buy a range of music technologies through the prison's formal economy and commonly bought items are stereo's, radios, CD's and Hi-Fi's. As outlined above, prisoner's use of private cash is highly regulated and in order to save up for a radio or stereo they are heavily incentivised to engage with the regime through work or education.

Several recent studies have considered the role of music outside of formalised environments (Bensimon et al. 2015, Edri & Bensimon 2019, Herrity 2018, Hjørnevik & Waage 2018). Edri and Bensimon's (2019) work in an Israeli men's prison refers to the requirement felt by

their respondents to present a masculine and emotionally restrained outward demeanour as a means of maintaining security and status within the institution. Feeling unable to show perceived vulnerability through the public expression of emotion music was said to provide prisoners a 'channel for the release of emotional pain' (Edri et al. 2018:6). For Edri et al. a key assertion is that the 'pains of imprisonment' which characterise the sparse and adversarial experience of imprisonment produce a state of continual strain for prisoners who, separated from support mechanisms and sources of validation and comfort, rely on music as a source of positive emotional stimulus which, in turn, provides the basis for the discovery of meaning and a sustained sense of purpose.

A similar notion is expressed by Hjørnevik & Waage (2018:3), in their situated study of musical therapy in a low-security, Norwegian prison, who echo DeNora et al.'s (2013) assertion that music can provide a "respite from distress and a place and time in which it is possible to flourish". The authors explore the role of music within the 'emotional geography' (Crewe et al. 2014) of the prison, describing how certain spaces or 'zones' within the prison engendered a relaxation of the tense, masculine rules around emotional behaviour and interaction described above. Music was shown to dissolve the distinction between public and private spaces in Harbert's (2013) account of choral music a woman's prison in America, illustrating how music provided spaces of separation and privacy even within the public environment of the prison workshops.

Kate Herrity's (2018) exploration of the relationship between music and identity is based on accounts from current and former prisoners in the UK and echoes this concern with the spatial dynamics of the institution. Drawing on the work of Goffman (1956, 1963) and DeNora (2000, 2013), Herrity describes how music is used by prisoners as a means of recapturing feelings of self and identity which become 'fragmented' through the depersonalising effects of imprisonment (Jewkes, 2005). Drawing on DeNora's (2000) reconfiguration of Foucault's 'technology of the self', Herrity conceptualises music as a tool which aids prisoners in enduring the social and psychological challenges which characterise the experience of imprisonment. Rice (2016:2) suggests that music holds the potential to 'manage' and 'direct' their emotions, offering means of coping with the affective dynamics of the prison. Edri et al. describe not only the therapeutic value of music to prisoners but also the problems associated with it, indicating that music can create conflicts between prisoners over the volume and genre of the music played in shared environments. Herrity (2018) as well as Hemsworth (2015) and Rice (2016) also refer to this tendency for music and sound

to create tension amongst prisoners whose presence within the closely shared space¹ would tend to spill into places where it was unwanted.

The accounts outlined in this section illustrate the significance of music as part of the social, affective, cultural, and sensory world of the prison. As the previous sections have sought to show, the late-modern prison is defined by increasingly levels of stress and uncertainty and the existing research indicates that music holds an great significance to prisoners seeking to manage the 'tightening' of the institution. (Crewe, 2011). Furthermore, music is not only a means of managing the affective dynamics of the prison, but also appears to constitute part of them (Herrity, 2014; Hemsworth, 2015; Rice, 2016). This is clear from both a sensory and cultural perspective as, like television (Jewkes, 2002) music provides a vehicle for cultural forms to 'permeate' (Moran and Keinänen, 2012) prison, creating continuities between inside and outside (Shabazz, 2009; Bramwell, 2018). The following section explores some of these themes further with reference to the sociology and psychology of music before outlining the principal research questions that will guide the ensuing empirical chapters.

2.3 Conceptualising Music and Emotion

The dynamic nature of the prison's emotional life is often referred to amongst prison researchers (Liebling, 1999; Jewkes, 2011; Laws and Crewe, 2016) and, as the accounts in the previous section suggest, it is within the emotional lives of prisoners that music holds its greatest importance. As Hesmondhalgh (2013) suggests, it was the capacity of music to influence a subject's moral dispositions in various ways that concerned theorists in the middle ages and these concerns tended to rely on an 'intersubjective' understanding of feeling. The study of emotions was tied up with questions of rationality and morality throughout much of western history and Descartes' suggestion that 'passions' emerged from the pineal gland are emblematic of what de Boise (2015) refers to as 'hard-wired' concepts of emotion. Descartes' separation between mind and body constructed emotions as irrational impulses that required management and constraint through the rational faculties of the mind. Higgins (2011, Cited in Hesmondalgh, 2013) describes a range of theorisations of the relationship between music and emotion and identifies *imitation/representation*, *arousal*, and *expression* as key themes throughout the 19th and 20th

¹ A recent measure at HMP Buckley Hall to provide earplugs to prisoners to ensure that prisoners were not disturbed at night saw a reduction in violence. (Inside Times, 2019)

centuries. These theories were rooted on the relation between music and the body, eschewing questions of context for most part. As Juslin & Sloboda (2010:22) suggests, the 'rediscovery' of the mind at the end of the 20th century lead to a greater emphasis on cognitive appraisal theories wherein emotion is understood to be 'object-focussed'. In this framework, music is understood as a situational stimulus whose properties come to be categorised in line with specific emotional responses from the perceiver. This process of categorisation opens up the question of the question of culture, and social constructionist accounts of that emphasise the culturally learned components of emotional experience. In these accounts, Turner explains (2009), emotions are understood to be mediated by cultures which determine how situations come to be emotionally appraised as well as what types of emotional response are considered appropriate for a given situation.

Social and cultural theory in early and mid-parts of the 20th century was concerned with the ways in which music exerted forms of agency over listeners by exploring the formal and semiotic properties of music. Most famously, Adorno (1944) interrogated the relation between the relations of production from which music was made, perceiving the increasingly industrial logical of mass-media as an explanation for the absence of political resistance amongst working classes. A crucial shift in this approach occurred in the 1960's-70's in the UK with the emergence a new form of cultural studies emerging form the Birmingham School for Contemporary Cultural Studies. Here the emphasis shifted from seeking to understand how large-scale social arrangements come to influence texts and their consumers, towards inquiry into how consumers creatively interact with texts to construct their social and emotional lives. Seminal studies such as *Resistance through Rituals* (Hall and Jefferson 1976) and *Profane Culture* (Willis 1978), though routed in analysis of class relations and ideology, showed how subjects used music to construct individual and collective identities by articulating the aesthetic properties of the music and, in DeNora's terms, 'mapping' them onto other areas of their life. As DeNora (2000) explains, these approaches seek to move away from the concept of music as a discrete agency whose properties have the capacity to alter a listener's subjective state. Instead, 'situated' approaches seek to explore the ways in which subjective and environmental context come to influence the way that music was put to use in the service of specific goals. DeNora (2000) describes how music 'affords' certain activities and inhibits others, emphasising how music's capacity to exert agency is dependent on the relations and contexts to which it is applied.

DeNora's (2000, 2013) work focusses on the role of music within agents' emotional lives, describing music as the 'cultural material of emotion *par excellence*'. Here the relation between music and emotion is conceptualised along the lines of 'emotional regulation' (Gross, 2014). Gross

outlines a range of emotional regulation strategies (*'situation selection, situation modification, attentional deployment, cognitive change, and response modulation'* (2014:388)) which occur at different stages within the process of emotion generation and represent efforts to intervene on the processes by which emotions come to be experienced and expressed. These strategies are often deployed in combination with each other and depend on the subject's immediate goal (i.e. reducing the intensity or duration of an emotional experience), as well as their awareness of the emotion they're experiencing and its situational context. In contrast to the cognitive model of emotion production, the 'process model' sees emotion as a continuous event which is determined by a range of internal and external stimuli.

DeNora's approach proceeds along similar lines and her application of Foucault's concept of 'technologies of the self' (2000:46) describes the ways in which subjects come to regulate and constitute themselves in relation to the emotional demands of their environment. Central to this process is the capacity for music to provide access to memories of affective intensity which provide resources for individuals to transition into and away from various affective states. In this respect, music is not considered as a discrete agency but rather a 'cultural material' (2000:46) used to bind together relations between people, objects, places, feelings, and ideas as ways of situating the self in the world.

Kreuger's (2015) work draws on DeNora's and seeks to conceptualise these practices in terms of cognitive science. Kreuger's concept of 'Feedback' refers to the closely bound processes of hearing, thinking, feeling, and doing which constitute a musical experience. This proximity between music and these embodied processes means that music functions as a 'scaffold' (Kreuger, 2015) to our emotional regulation system, allowing us to offset some of this 'bio-regulatory work' onto the music. Kreuger explains this by reference to the 'integrated' nature of music perception and emotional responsiveness which 'recruit core brain structures involved in initiating, generating, detecting, maintaining, and regulating emotions' (*ibid*:51) Our perception of music thus shapes the way we feel and hence allows us to intervene on this process in 'real-time' (*ibid*:50). It is in this way that music can be understood to be expressive of feelings, as it shapes and inflects the way that emotion is experienced, as it is experienced. Emotion is thus seen as a reflexive interaction between the self and the environment on a number of levels including the biological, cognitive, material and cultural.

At the heart of this study, then, is the question of how music occurs within the emotional lives of prisoners and, as the following section will argue, answering this question requires an approach which can situate music across a range of causal dimensions.

2.3.1 Music and the Prison Environment

Drawing on the existing research outlined in the previous sections, a central assumption of this investigation is that the distinct social, spatial, and affective characteristics of the prison will effect the ways in which prisoners use and experience music within their daily lives. As the work of Herrity (2014, 2018), Rice (2016) and Edri & Bensimon (2019) suggest, music offers a tool to assist prisoners in emotional regulation strategies within the distinctly stressful conditions of the prison outlined in section 1. Herrity (2014, 2018), Rice (2016) and Hjørnevik & Waage (2018) refer to DeNora's concept of 'technology of the self' to illustrate how the pains associated with dislocation are negotiated in various ways through the use of music. However, these accounts provide little detail on the ways in which music is used as a means of self-regulation and, aside from Herrity's (2014) study of ex-prisoners, these practices are not situated within the context of daily life. Herrity (2018) and Hjørnevik & Waage's (2018) explorations of the role of music in relation to self and identity illustrate how music provides important resources for coping with the pains of dislocation (Crewe et al. 2020) and offer valuable insights for further exploring important themes of desistance and adaptation.

Given the emphasis on the relationship between individuals and their environment outlined in DeNora's account, being able to situate musical practices within the distinct environment of the prison is vital for understanding how prisoners inhabit and construct their emotional worlds. While Hemsworth (2015) and Rice (2016) situate music as part of a broader environment, these accounts approach music from the perspective of sound and sensation and, as such, do not capture the discursive and embodied characteristics that appear vital to understanding the capacity for music to constitute practice. Furthermore, these accounts are based on secondary sources and are thus limited to the range and recall of the accounts from which they drew their data.

As earlier sections have shown, music's relationship to institutional systems of control means that access for prisoners is highly regulated. This scarcity stands in direct contrast to much of the existing sociology of music whose theoretical frameworks tend to rest upon the increasing

ubiquity of music on which to base key assumptions (DeNora, 2000; Hesmondhalgh, 2013; Kreuger, 2015). As such, placing the materiality of music within the prison under greater focus offers an opportunity to consider the extent to which the existing theory may exhibit contextual specificity when contrasted with the prison.

Exploring the role and use of music technology within the prison provides the means to extend the understanding of materiality within the prison more broadly and, in particular, the economic life of the prison. Thus far, the prison's economy has tended to be viewed through the lens of either the drug trade or IEP however little research has been done to explore the role of objects and commodities more generally within the daily life of the prison. Baer's (2005) study of the decoration of cell's in a UK Young Offenders Institution offers an exception and he describes the role of objects within the symbolic economy of the prison, describing the visual strategies of negotiation and resistance employed by young prisoners through the display of toiletries. Here the display of objects are seen as a form of inscription onto the material surface of the prison and allow prisoners to negotiate the pains felt from the feeling of spatial and temporal contingency. Related themes can be seen in Valentine & Longstaff's (1998) study of food within the prison which is often used as a commodity alongside other objects and services. References are also made to the symbolic value of clothes and shoes (Crewe, 2009) however the role of objects as part of the prison's 'material culture' more broadly has yet to be explored within the context of the prison. As previous sections have noted, the daily life of the prison is determined to a great extent by the sensory and material features and in this respect investigating the role of music represents an opportunity to tie together the social and emotional dynamics of the prison with the cultural and material.

Finally, an area missing from the existing research is an exploration of the role of music within the collective life of the prison. As Hesmondhalgh (2013:2) suggests, an important component of music's significance in social life is its role as the "basis of collective, public experiences" which underlies music's capacity as a 'bridge' between public and private, negotiating the increasingly blurred nature of these forms in contemporary social life. As Crewe et al. (2014) and Laws and Crewe (2016) note, this blurring of public and private space is a common feature of prison life and, as Ricciardelli et al. (2015) show, these socio-spatial dynamics can profoundly influence the ways in which prisoners interact with each other and form relationships. As De Boise's (2015) work on music, masculinity and emotion suggests music can provide a means of engaging in conversations about emotions with respondents who may otherwise lack the will or desire to talk about it. Given the tendency for forms of masculine performance to pervade within the prison,

it is possible that music may allow access to forms of data that may otherwise be hidden in these circumstance.

The affective world of the prison is a frame of analysis that is becoming increasingly significant and in this respect music may provide a useful interrogative tool for exploring concepts such the 'emotional geography' (Crewe et al, 2014) of the prison and adding empirical data to extend these areas of analysis. Riedel's (2015) work on music and 'atmosphere' provides a further theoretical perspective on the collective life of the prison describing how music can bind together individuals in shared affectively attuned environments. This perspective may provide further insight into the emerging work around carceral atmospheres (Turner and Peters, 2015).

2.3.2 Research Questions

This section has sought to bring together relevant research from a range of sources and disciplines relevant to the question of music in prison. From these sources several key themes have been identified and the following research questions seek to incorporate these themes as guiding questions over the following chapters.

- 1. How does music help prisoners adapt to the challenges of late-modern imprisonment?*
- 2. What is the role of music in the collective life of the prison?*

Chapter 3

Methodology

The aim of this study is to explore the role of music in the daily life of the prison and to provide in-depth empirical data on an under-researched topic in prison research. While the focus is on residents and staff, the study aims to situate the experience of individuals within a broader conceptual framework considering the social, material, and institutional dynamics that constitute daily life. Drawing on research from the sociology of music as well as the field of carceral geography, the investigation has sought to describe how music constitutes part of a range of reflexive practices by which individuals negotiate and construct their environment. In order to attain this type of in-depth data which is attuned to the relations between individuals and their environment, the investigation has drawn on range of conceptual approaches which are explored in the following section.

3.1 Conceptual Framework

Drawing on DeNora's (2000) research on musical practices in everyday life, the study was oriented around a key assumption that the social, material, and affective dynamics of an environment would influence the constitution of music. This is to say that understanding the role of music, broadly conceived, within the daily life of the prison required a 'situated' (DeNora, 2000) understanding of music in relation to the meanings, practices, conditions, and beliefs of those who lived and worked within the prison. As DeNora (2000) argues, music's agency cannot be understood in terms of the intrinsic properties of objects or texts but must instead be seen in terms of a material that facilitates certain associations between human and non-human agencies. This approach derives from Science and Technology Studies and, in particular, the work of Bruno Latour (2005) whose Actor-Network Theory (ANT) has provided an important conceptual backdrop to this study. Latour describes this approach not as a positive theory of action but rather as an 'infra-theory' or 'language' for describing the ways in which actors are involved in the ongoing construction and re-construction of the world. ANT seeks to trace associations between human and non-human agencies and, in doing so, seeks to avoid the tendency across the social sciences for

'anthropocentrism'. This term relates to the tendency within social sciences to rely on 'social' explanations for phenomena at the exclusion of other non-human agencies; that is, that such explanations conceptualise society as a discrete material or 'force' which can produce comparatively reductive explanations for complex and heterogeneous phenomena. Both human and non-human actors are attributed the same capacity for agency in ANT and thus the tracing of associations between these types of actors allows researchers to describe the world in ways which do not privilege human agency. Furthermore, this approach also allows the researcher to maintain a 'flat ontology' (Latour, 2005) by rejecting explanations that require the superimposition of different ontological frameworks onto a given phenomenon. Maintaining a 'flat ontology' requires causality to be traced through lines of association and ensures that explanations are grounded in immediately apparent agencies.

DeNora's (2000) approach follows along these lines in treating music as a meeting point of social, cultural, technological, affective, and spatial agencies rather than as a discrete form of agency. It follows that her focus is therefore on the types of practice and agency that music makes possible within given situations. This approach seeks to avoid the issues of anthropocentrism as well as cultural determinism in which agency is attributed to the aesthetic or textual properties of 'music itself'. DeNora (2000) argues that the agency of music to create feelings and impressions derives as much from the situation in which it occurs as from the properties of the music. Furthermore, for music to be considered to have meaning, it must be understood as part of the reflexive practices by which individuals construct meaning in their lives and not as some intrinsic property of a piece of music. As outlined in the previous section, the prison has also come to be conceptualised in this way in the field of 'carceral geography', whose interest in the interactions between individuals and their material environment has provided theoretical insight into the nature and experience of imprisonment. Rather than a fixed and materially consistent entity characterised by a particular social arrangement, in these accounts, the prison is conceptualised as a dynamic and heterogeneous assemblage of rules, materials, objects, emotions, and processes. Both music and the prison are understood as relations between people and their material environment whose construction requires continual work. It is this work, either by people or objects, that this project seeks to foreground in understanding the role of music in prison (Baer and Ravneberg, 2008).

This Actor-Network inspired approach was chosen as it provided contrast to the existing research on music in prisons which – as indicated in the preceding chapters – has been primarily focussed around the social and psychological dimensions of imprisonment as they relate to questions of well-being and rehabilitation. In this respect, these accounts can be said to be

'anthropocentric', in that they do not focus on the materiality of music or its role within the broader prison environment. As the sociological and carceral geography literature suggests, the prison is a dynamic and heterogeneous environment and as such understanding the role of music within these dynamics requires 'thick' (Geertz, 1973), situated and sustained engagement with the field. The role of this study is not to focus on these material dimensions, but rather, through an approach which takes on the broader assumptions and position of ANT, to re-frame the understanding of the social and affective dimensions of imprisonment in order to include these agencies in our understanding.

3.2 Research Design

Through consideration of the existing literature within both the sociology of prisons and music, it became clear that access to the daily life of the prison and the musical practices that constituted it required direct and sustained contact with a prison in a way which other studies had yet to provide. The emphasis on understanding the ways in which subjects interacted with their social and material environment placed a heavy emphasis on the use of qualitative methods in order to allow the practices and meanings held by research participants to be apprehended. The principal aim of the project was to explore the role of music within the prison to provide empirical description and apply theory to the phenomena that occurred. Due to the lack of existing research as well as the desire for detailed insight into the everyday life of the prison, an inductive and ethnographically oriented approach was therefore deemed to be most appropriate for the gathering and analysing the data. Specifically, ethnography's focus on people's actions in 'everyday contexts' (Hammersley and Atkins, 2007:3) is the implicit approach suggested by DeNora (2000), who emphasises the importance of perceiving musical practices in relation to their environment. Furthermore, the investigation was based around a single site in order to facilitate 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) of individuals in reflexive construction of their selves and environment. This approach was deemed to be coherent with the Actor-Network oriented conceptual framework and though the research did not follow strictly ANT style of methodology the infra-theory was applied throughout the investigation to maintain the conceptual framework. ANT seeks to build theory around the contours, flows, and associations that constitute the field and therefore requires the researcher to be responsive to the environment rather than being tied to existing frameworks or hypotheses. This approach is described in terms of 'following' (Latour, 2005:17) connections made by actors, observing their trajectory, and seeking to understand that connection within a larger network of associations. While the prison was permeable in many ways, for prisoners the experience of imprisonment implied a clear set of boundaries between them and the outside of

the prison and, as such, the method of 'following' actors was harder to achieve. However, attention was given to the spatial, material, and cultural flows that occurred within the prison and ANT provided a vital framework for making sense of these and incorporating forms of relation that crossed over the prison walls.

3.2.1 Fieldwork: Overview

The fieldwork for the current study, which took place at one male category B prison, spanned a period of nine months in total, comprising on average of two to three days per week at the site of the study (for more details on HMP South Hill, see section 3.2.3); primarily the research took place throughout the daytime, but occasionally – and deliberately – conversations and observations extended further into the night. The main points of contact within the prison were the senior administrative staff who worked in the Resettlement department of the prison, and a desk in their office functioned as a base throughout this fieldwork.

The methodology followed a mixture of inductive and abductive principles taking influence from grounded-theory approaches (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Charmaz, 2006). Inductive research involves the construction of theory from data gathered through investigation and entails the suspension of hypotheses and theoretical claims until the end of the investigation. As Charmaz further describes, abductive investigation involves the construction of hypotheses throughout the research process to explain certain phenomena, before evaluating the plausibility of each explanation by empirically testing them. Certain limitations occurred in implementing a fully inductive approach in particular the requirement to avoid relevant literature prior to the research in order to avoid 'theoretical bias'. In the case of the prison, characterised as dynamic site, constructed around power-relations where the threat of harm to respondents is present, entering the field without understanding the sociological and psychological dynamics of the prison was considered to risk the ethical integrity of the research.

In-keeping with the combination of inductive and abductive approaches, the research was designed to include a pilot followed by three distinct research stages wherein the assumptions and focus of the research were adjusted in relation to the data which was gathered. Details of these stages will be outlined in section 3.2.5, but the aim was to provide space within the research to undertake abductive reasoning on which to base the research questions.

The pilot study involved a preliminary set of 5 interviews and aimed to test the research instrument as well as the arrangements used to interview respondents. In total, thirty interviews – the specifics of which are discussed further below – constituting 26 prisoners and 4 uniformed staff were undertaken and these were sampled in a ‘purposive’ manner. Purposive sampling (or theoretical sampling) is described by Charmaz (2006) as ‘emergent’ and depends on the theoretical questions that arise from the data. While aspects of inductive and adaptive approaches were incorporated into the research design, the principal approach driving the research methodology was abductive. By integrating analysis and reflection into the research design, the direction of the research was determined by synthesising existing research with emergent observational and interview data to produce a series of research hypotheses used to guide the direction of the research. As described in more detail in section 3.2.5, these hypotheses were reviewed in relation to the emergent data and used as a points of reflection from which base decisions relating sampling as well as the interview schedule and observation.

The interviews typically took place on the wing and lasted between 40 minutes and an hour; all of these were recorded using a digital Dictaphone. The interviews were transcribed and analysed using coding software as well as paper-based visualisation methods. Fieldnotes were taken throughout the investigation and these were used, alongside the interviews, to structure reflections that were used to determine the direction of the investigation. Fieldnotes facilitated the gathering of detailed accounts of behaviour and conversation (Emerson et al. 1995) encountered within the field, as well as facilitating greater access to the sensory features of the environment (Pink, 2009) by allowing the immediate recording of observations in the forms of feelings and sensations.

3.2.2 Access

It was the senior administrative staff at the field site who acted as ‘gatekeepers’ and who finally agreed to allow the research at their prison. This proceeded a long period of uncertainty in which several establishments were approached about facilitating the research. Prior to receiving clearance from the National Research Council (NRC) – the research gatekeepers to HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) (then the National Offender Management Service) – individual contacts within these prisons were often elusive, and many were reluctant to make any firm commitments to allow the research. Even where progress seemed to have been made, unforeseen events could

lead to the collapse of the prisons' potential acquiesce; at one establishment, for example, a promising lead was scuppered by a change in the prison's governor, which led to all non-routine activities and projects being postponed until a permanent arrangement was found. This uncertainty seemed to plague the initial year in which the attempt to gain access for this study was undertaken. In retrospect, it now seems clear that governors and facilitators were unwilling to take research requests seriously until official clearance for the project had been received from the NRC; a process which began in May 2017.

Access-seeking interactions with HMPSS went through several rounds in which the research proposal was scrutinised in terms of its value, feasibility, and cost to the prison service. King & Liebling (2008) explore the difficulties involved in demonstrating that one's research has value to the prison service beyond its 'official' stated purpose. In this case, the exploratory frame of the proposed research fit awkwardly (and to some degree, hardly at all) with the institutional goals of the HMPPS and required the re-orientation of the language used to describe the project and the consideration of key concepts from more instrumentally-grounded frameworks (Cf. Liebling, 1999). NRC clearance was finally granted in August, 2017, and shortly after contact was made with HMP South Hill² who expressed some interest and invited me to the prison for a meeting with the Learning, Skills and Employment (LSM) manager and the Head of Reducing Reoffending to discuss the research (both maintained an important role throughout the project). During the meeting, senior administrative staff expressed some interest in exploring the value of music within the prison, citing examples from HMP Stocken where prisoners were given space to perform to each other during dinner and association. They agreed to facilitate the research and to arrange key-training, so that the recruitment, interviews and observation, and could - theoretically - continue unimpeded and with minimal resource impact on the institution.

However, entering the prison and receiving keys was not the end of the 'access' journey; indeed, this was a concept that came to hold a dynamic and fluid status throughout the research, and was one that required ongoing negotiation. For instance, the prison's LSM manager was responsible for orientation to the field site and introduction to further gatekeepers within HMP South Hill; namely the Custody Managers (CMs) who ran each of the prison's six houseblocks. Despite the facilitation of this process, for the first weeks after receiving keys the most persistent impediment to access to data was the feeling of discomfort. While the CM's had been largely facilitating, it took me several weeks to build up the confidence to begin recruitment due to my

² This is a pseudonym, designed to protect the anonymity of the participants.

inhibitions about entering the houseblock alone and fears of appearing incompetent or making mistakes. Access was not, therefore, a straightforward notion that receded from vision as soon as prison keys were handed over, but rather it was a relational concept that expanded and retracted in asymmetrical ways as I interacted with the environment and those that populated it. Furthermore, the administration of the prison provided consistent impediments; for example, interviews (as 'non-essential'/'routine' activity) were frequently cancelled and postponed due to the curtailment of the regime. Access was therefore dependent on a range of dynamics and the former issues of self-perception will be reflected on in more detail in section 3.5 on 'positionality'.

3.2.3 Research Site

HMP South Hill is a men's category B local prison which, at the time of the fieldwork, was transitioning into a category C training prison. The establishment was situated in the south of England and took prisoners from some regions of London and surrounding parts of the home counties. South Hill also functioned as an overflow prison for other nearby establishments and was required to accept prisoners leaving court hearings late into the night.

The prison housed over 1000 men in six houseblocks, the majority of whom lived in shared cells. Of the six houseblocks, three held specific roles and held distinct subgroups of the general population: induction and first-night supervision; drug rehabilitation; and vulnerable prisoners. These houseblocks were split into two or three spurs housing 60-80 prisoners and some of these spurs held particular demographics of prisoners which were oriented around security concerns such as gang involvement. On the Vulnerable Population (VP) houseblock, the two spurs were split up by age with B spur holding the prison's oldest residents in order to consolidate the type of care that was afforded to them.

HMP South Hill was built in the late 20th century and its design was based around a central, two-tiered walkway with houseblocks and other buildings extending off to the sides. While the spatial and material qualities of Victorian prisons such as Pentonville and Wandsworth were of principal interest in advance of the research, many of the auditory dynamics (banging of doors and gates, the hollow and resonant spaces) which were assumed to have been designed-out of more recent prisons appeared present at South Hill. In many ways the auditory profile of South Hill was very similar to that of Wandsworth, since, despite differences the layout and size of the buildings, many of the same materials and interior design had been used.

The prison held a wide range of ages and sentence lengths. On the general population spurs, it was common for 'Young Offenders' (i.e. those aged 18-20 years) to closely cohabit with men in their 50's, 60's and even older. Recent data from HM Inspectorate of Prisons³ indicates that approximately one third of its prisoners were between the ages of 21-29, with the second most populous age category being 30-39 at roughly a quarter of the overall population. Furthermore, due to the institutional character of the local prison, sentence lengths were highly variable amongst the prisoner population with around 40% of the population held unsentenced at various stages of the legal process. Of the two-thirds of the population who were sentenced, the population was distributed fairly evenly across a range of short, mid-length, and long sentences, with a marked increase in the number of prisoners sentenced for over 10 years on non-life sentences compared with the other categories. While the prison held a higher proportion of long-term prisoners, the majority of residents would not expect to stay long at HMP South Hill; the function of the local prison was, in part, to prepare prisoners for long-stay prisons where the bulk of custodial sentences were served. Furthermore, the emergent function of the prison as a training establishment meant that South Hill was a place for prisoners at the end of sentences to access vocational training and education as part of their resettlement plan. Thus, while prisoners tended slightly towards longer sentences, very few of them expected to spend more than the first few years at HMP South Hill.

Another important feature was the high number of new prison officers who worked at the prison. At the time of the research, more than half of the prison officers at South Hill were in the first year of their career and a large proportion of the senior staff had been temporarily promoted in order to fill the higher responsibility roles. In addition to the institutional uncertainty that came from the prison's dual status as a local and training prison, the relative inexperience of the staff provided challenges for the institution and the regime would frequently grind to a halt due to miscounts of the roll-call or understaffing due to sick leave.

While the extent of this transience that characterised daily-life within the prison was not fully understood in the lead up to the project, the character of the local prison (HMIP, 2019), its institutional function, and its high rates of 'churn'⁴ were seen as interesting characteristics to investigate as part of an exploration of the social and cultural life of the prison. Furthermore, the wide range of ages and sentence lengths provided a valuable resource for the exploratory frame

³ Nb. This source does not appear in the bibliography of the thesis as to name the report would be to compromise the anonymity of the field site. For this reason, the statistics given here are deliberately vague.

⁴ The turnover of prisoners leaving and entering a prison on a given day.

of the project, offering the opportunity to engage with a range of perspectives and explore the significance of age, sentence-length, and sentence stage in relation to the use of music.

3.2.4 The Merits and Limitations of Quasi-Ethnographic Observation in Prison

The principal aim of observation was to document the daily lives of staff and residents within the prison in a detailed and immersive manner. The need for immersion derives from the value within ethnographic research for proximity to one's field and those who inhabit it. As Fielding (In Gilbert, 2001) suggests, ethnography is oriented around understanding the meanings attributed by actors to their environment. Through sustained observation of and involvement within particular cultures, the researcher is able to "'think" oneself' into the 'perspective' of those who constitute it (2001:148). Observation constitutes a key feature of ethnographic research; however, the prison presents distinct issues for researchers wishing to undertake ethnographic investigation. While largely unrestricted access was given to the prison in many respects, this section discusses the limitations of the ethnographic method instituted in this investigation, aligning it closer to the concept of 'quasi-ethnography' (Inicardi et al. 1993).

Observation was a continuous process throughout the fieldwork and played an important role in determining aspects of the research design. The iterative nature of the project allowed the data gathered to be fed back into the research in the form of sample groups, interview instruments, and research questions. During the initial period of the fieldwork, however, observation provided a way to acclimatise to the prison and documenting this process provided an important resource for reflexively situating myself within the site.

The initial period was largely unstructured and based around encounters and observations that arose from walking around the prison. These walks, taken normally during the quiet periods in the middle of the day, would facilitate acclimatisation to some of most emergent features of the spatial and acoustical dynamics of the prison. From outside the houseblocks loud music, alarms, snippets of conversations could be heard through windows and these provided some initial insights into the social life of the prison. Furthermore, this practice provided a way of learning the geography of the prison and developing a level of comfort in opening and closing the various gates and doors.

After these walks, field notes would be written up in the office in the resettlement hub. The position of the office next to the walkway meant that the afternoon free flow⁵ would pass loudly and vibrantly past the window in the afternoon and would last for at least ten minutes. This event changed the atmosphere of the prison profoundly, making it clear that the observations gathered from outside the houseblocks during 'bang-up'⁶ were providing very partial data. Holding keys facilitated access to parts of the prison in ways which prisoners were fundamentally unable to, providing a separate experience of the environment from that of the residents. Even on the walkways which were used by prisoners on a regular basis, my experience of the space was entirely different from the prisoners who had just been let out of their cells after a period of several hours and were now allowed to momentarily associate with others from a range of houseblocks. This was a clear example of how environments came to be constructed by those who inhabited it and the vibrant, brash, and noisy explosion of energy that represented free flow made clear the need to become sensorially and affectively involved within these spaces that prisoners collectively occupied in order gain a closer understanding of their daily lives.

Instances like this occurred throughout the project and observation and the reflections that they produced functioned to highlight the limitations of my access to the experience of imprisonment. These realisations articulated my 'outsider positionality' (Flores, 2018) and the disadvantages that came with it. Feelings of discomfort, awkwardness, and fear were clear features of this subjective frame but more fundamentally, this positionality hid certain features of the prison from view. Discussions with prison officers would often evidence this further and conversations would occasionally be halted momentarily as they responded to some fluctuation in the auditory environment of which I had no awareness. In other instances, however, it was clear that the sensitivity that newcomers had to the prison was shared by me and in these instances, sensitivity to noises and sensations which had long been filtered-out (Brown et al. 2019) by staff and residents were clearly open to my apprehension. Being an outsider within the institution gave me a certain insight on the sensory and affective world of the prison, in some instances, and allowed me to design my observations in a more systematic and focussed manner as the investigation progressed.

The double doors at the entrance to each houseblock represented both a physical and symbolic boundary for me in the early months of the research, and on the occasions where I would enter in order to make contact with a CM or to check the post-box for recruitment slips I would

⁵ The supervised movement of prisoners from houseblocks to work and education.

⁶ The periods of the day where prisoners are locked in their cells.

feel immediately uneasy. The relative warmth of the houseblock carried the musky aroma of cleaning fluids, laundry, stale tobacco and food in a way which felt cloying and immediate. These odours seemed redolent of domestic spaces and as I approached the staff office at the near end of the cells, I would often feel like an interloper in someone's home. I would feel the keys around my belt swinging awkwardly and conspicuously as I passed people along the entrance hallway and I would invariably fumble any attempts to open doors along the way.

My understanding of observation prior to the research had been based upon classical ethnographic studies such as *Street Corner Society* (Whyte, 1943), in which researchers were able to embed themselves within a culture or community in a covert way allowing the observation of spontaneous practices and conversations. When I entered the spurs, however, my presence was far from covert and my status as an unfamiliar, non-uniformed, key carrier provoked constant attention from prisoners curious about my role within the prison. My interest in observing the sensory and affective dynamics of the prison's shared environments was thus rendered difficult by the distorting effect of my presence within the cell. Where Whyte was able to blend in, the distinct relations of power required by the prison rendered me instantly visible. Furthermore, I felt unable to inhabit the spur during association for any continuous period of time without feeling as if I was interfering in an exploitative and non-consensual way.

While I was unable to embed myself fully within the spur, my recruitment strategy offered some level of exposure to these environments across a number of houseblocks and as I became more confident I would often take the opportunity, while looking for a resident to organise an interview with or handing out recruitment forms, to engage in conversation with those around me and inhabit the space for sustained periods. Subsequently, I would hurry back to the Resettlement hub or find an empty room in the entrance area in order to write down my observations. Another way around this issue was to explore different collectively held spaces. As Crewe et al (2014) suggest, the residential areas of the prison were considered to be public spaces and, as such, were oriented around particular social codes. While these areas could host warmth and conviviality, they could also quickly become tense depending on the dynamics which were unfolding at a given moment and prisoners were required to be attentive to these shifts and act accordingly. However, as Crewe (*ibid*) notes, areas such as the education department were less dynamic and performances in these spaces could be relaxed. In the case of the Music Technology classroom which I would frequently visit for the duration of the class, this relaxed atmosphere, mediated by the creative and stimulating activity, allowed me to recede into the background and assume a less conspicuous position.

Similarly, joining residents along the walkway during free flow allowed me a similar anonymity within shared environments. Being able to assume a purposeful stride alongside prisoners allowed me to observe group dynamics, body-language, and hear small extracts of conversation in a far more immersive way than I had been able to at the beginning of the investigation. While ethical issues presented themselves as I became more sensitive to some of the dynamics on the walkway (described in more detail in section 3.7 below), observational strategies such as these were vital tools for negotiating the complexities of access and triangulating some of the important social and affective dynamics which were often hidden from sight.

The challenges and limitations outlined in the previous section illustrate some of the difficulties of conducting ethnographic research within the prison. Here the principal issues centred around the 'natural' (Hammersley and Atkins, 2007) quality of the settings as well as the extent to which I was able to immerse myself within the daily life of the prison given that I was unable to inhabit the prison in the same way as its residents. As outlined above, the issue of 'naturalism' was never fully resolved, however as I grew more familiar with the site and attentive to its social and affective dynamics I was able to identify spaces such as the music tech classroom and the upper-walkway where forms of 'naturalistic' observation could be undertaken. As Bandyopadhyay (In eds. Drake & Earl, 2015) suggests, quasi-ethnography involves acknowledging the limitations of the research in relation to fully immersive and sustained forms of ethnography. In the case of this study, being unable to live within the prison, being constantly identified and differentiated as an outsider by the necessity of holding keys (amongst other signifiers), finding access restricted to the full range of activities and practices experienced by residents at HMP South Hill- these features constituted limitations to the scope of the ethnographic insight that was possible to be gathered. However, it is in 'countering the structural barriers of access' (Bandyopadhyay, In eds. Drake, D & Earl, R 2015) that insight of ethnographic value can be attained.

Considering the limits of immersion within the prison, it is clear that sustained sensory contact with certain features of the prison are inaccessible. Access to prison cells, for instance, was forbidden and despite being briefly allowed to observe one on one occasion this does not come close to representing the experience of being confined within a prison cell for 22 hours. Claims that ethnography can ever fully capture and represent experience of others are, however, dubious and the limitations of this study must be considered in relation to the limitations of ethnography itself in this regard (Rhys-Taylor, 2017). To mitigate some of these 'blind spots' that occurred as a result of the prison's distinct configuration, aspects such as the cell and the sensory experience of imprisonment became important points of thematic exploration and strategies were built up in

order to set the interviews up as a space of interpretation. Here, the field-notes were particularly valuable and observations about the feeling of being in prison constituted important features of the interview schedule. These observations were brought to the interviews, not as objective claims, but as subjective data on which to base interactions and conversations in which interpretations about the nature of daily life within the prison could be collectively produced through dialogue.

3.2.5 Sampling and Recruitment

To begin with, interviewees were recruited through printed forms (appendix 3) handed out to residents or distributed throughout the houseblocks. Based on advice from peers conducting their doctoral research in prisons, recruitment forms for this study were handed out to potential participants, with the hope that this face-to-face approach would improve the response rate. This approach worked well, particularly in terms of facilitating dialogue about the research with potential respondents and encouraging them to fill in their forms. On some houseblocks it was possible to walk through the spurs freely, speaking to those encountered along the way and putting forms under doors of people's cells if they could not be located. In some cases, prisoners would offer to distribute the forms throughout their spur and in these cases a significantly higher response rate was achieved. On other houseblocks, however, the Custody Managers (CM) were more cautious, suggesting particular times of the day when 'responsible' prisoners on Enhanced status were either working or on association. Other suggestions included engaging prisoners when they were locked up and explaining the research through the cell door; however, this approach was advised against by research supervisors, on the grounds that this could be stressful and disturbing for prisoners as it risked breaching their privacy. As such, interacting through cell doors was kept to a minimum. Due to the perceived distinction between different houseblocks it seemed important that the interview sample should include respondents from every part of the prison in order to explore the social and cultural dynamics in each part. However, due to the perceived risk on some houseblocks by CM's it was not possible to implement the same direct strategy across each one. Leaving forms around the houseblocks in which access had been restricted yielded very few responses and, as such, a different approach was required.

Recruiting at work and education provided a means of accessing prisoners from 'risky' houseblocks without recruiting there directly. Along these lines, Music Technology classroom was a common spot to undertake observation and the class was constituted by prisoners from a variety

of different houseblocks. This space provided a relaxed environment in which to discuss the research and given that the class was oriented around music production, interviewees were more reliably recruited due to the existing interest that residents had for the topic. This constituted part of the purposive design (Lavrakas, 2008) of the sampling, though, as described below, the recruitment forms sought to enable sampling of individuals who described themselves as being uninterested in music in order to achieve a range of attitudes.

The forms asked respondents to provide some basic identification including their name, location within the prison, Personal Identification Number and their expected sentence length. The form then asked them to rate their interest in music on a three-point scale (Not at all, Somewhat, Very) and describe what they used to listen to music. These details were perceived to be useful for sampling based on limited information and aimed to ensure that a range of experiences and viewpoints were being heard. In eventuality, almost all of the respondents suggested they were very interested in music, although this approach did lead to an interview with a respondent who had a strong psychological aversion to music and provided an important sensory and affective contrast to many of the other accounts. In all, these aspects of the form were only marginally useful in themselves but served as a useful means of identifying respondents and recalling conversations which were useful for sampling. Finally, the form asked respondents to indicate a song which was important to them and which they were willing to listen to during the interview.

Prisoners were asked to drop these forms into a specific post box in their houseblock. After retrieval, the forms were organised by houseblock, and begun to determine a sample. Once a sample was confirmed, the prisoners would be approached and asked if they were willing to be interviewed and a time was arranged. The timing used in this process was refined throughout the course of the fieldwork as the regime became more familiar as well as the rhythms and routines kept by the residents (this is discussed further in section 3.2.7 below).

This process continued for the first months of the investigation until enough recruitment forms had been collected to allow selection from a reasonably broad range of demographics. As the fieldwork continued, many of those who had expressed interest were moved to a different prison or released and original set of recruitment forms was no longer relevant to the stage of sampling. At this point the recruitment strategy begun to incorporate snowball sampling (Arber in Gilbert, 2001), relying on the relationships established with both residents and staff to help recruit the final set.

As an inductive, quasi-ethnographic study (Inicardi, 1993), the sampling did not aim to produce a representative account of the population but rather to follow the contours of the data as it emerged and explore the topic in as broad and inclusive a way as possible. In this respect the data gathered cannot be said to be generalisable of the prison population of England and Wales or of HMP South Hill itself. While the overall sample of the study does reflect the demographic distribution of the population at the prison at the time of the research fairly closely, this was largely coincidental and, due to the relatively small sample size, cannot be considered an accurate measure. In Charmaz' (2006) terms, the aim of the research was not to test existing variables but rather to find 'new' variables and in this respect sample groups were determined according to what seemed 'interesting' (Latour, 2005) and significant in the data. Significance was determined by identifying emergent trends within both the interview and observational data and cross-referencing these findings with the existing literature. The decision to base the initial sample group on prison houseblocks, for instance, derived from both observational data as well as the existing literature which identified various ways in which the geography of the prison came to influence the social and affective lives of prisoners. Key observations centred on the ways in which staff attributed meaning to different houseblocks and spurs, identifying some as riskier than others. From this observation as well as the existing work on the 'emotional geography' (Crewe et al. 2014; Hemsworth 2015) of the prison, I devised a tentative hypothesis that the experience and use of music may differ depending on one's location within the prison. Due to the institutional function of the houseblocks (i.e. first-night block, detox block etc.) it was assumed that these characteristics would influence the social life on the spurs which would be reflected in the interviews. Residents on the VP houseblock, the Detox houseblock, the Induction houseblock, as well as two from one of the General Population houseblocks were selected for interview. Within this initial purposive sample group respondents were gathered in a fairly random manner with the understanding that the data gathered from this initial group would go on to inform further samples. Considering my assumption that these houseblocks would identify discrete attitudes or patterns of behaviour, the data gathered from the first sample group largely disproved this view as patterns of music consumption and access appeared to be determined by a far wider set of variables than those determined by the location of prisoners within the houseblock. While this did not mean that geography was not an important feature, the scale at which I was conceptualising the prison's geography appeared to be wrong and required me to recalibrate the scope of my sampling strategy for the next group. However, rather than confounding the research in any way, this abductive approach served as a means of generating reflections and systematising the analytical

process as the data was gathered. This approach allowed a certain fluidity to the research, allowing theories and hypotheses to come up against the reality of the data as it was gathered. Analytical work often occurred within the prison during the lunch hours when prisoners were locked-up in their cells and officers were in the canteen. Observations played a central role in this process and would be synthesised alongside interview data and existing research in the form of reflective passages and diagrams within the field-notes which would form the basis of decisions about sampling.

From the pilot group, for instance, the theme of age emerged within the data and, based on de Boise's (2015) research on men's music consumption in non-carceral settings, a hypothesis that age represented a determinant factor in the patterns of music usage was constructed. The second sample group thus sought to attain data from a broader age-range of respondents in order to test this assumption and explore the existing findings in relation to this particular theme. Proceeding in this way, the investigation began to focus on one houseblock in particular and some of the questions around geography identified in the pilot group were returned to. In particular the role of music in the social lives of the respondents became an interesting feature to explore by investigating to what extent practises and attitudes were shared by neighbours, cellmates, and those who resided on the same houseblock. The third sample group focussed in on a group of young, black Londoners who lived on the same spur and who represented a very distinct social grouping in the eyes of older prisoners.

The final sample group constituted four prison officers and six remaining prisoners. The officers were recruited via snowball sampling and selected in order to provide an important perspective on the topic. The final prisoners were selected in order to avoid underrepresentation of older residents and those from the VP wing. While the sampling did not aim for representation of the population, it did aim for a breadth of experiences and this final group was oriented around ensuring that experiences deemed important were fully explored. As the sampling process continued, identifying significant trends within the data became easier and more precise as theoretical ideas were tested and adapted to the emergent data. As more information was gathered about the prison, its distinct features such as the prevalence of prisoners from London came into clearer focus. In this respect the abductive approach taken in this study provided a link between the emergent data and the existing literature which, in turn, allowed methodological decisions to benefit from existing theory and data.

3.2.6 Demographic Overview

The distribution of prisoner and staff respondents across the various key demographics tended to favour the younger quartiles of the sample population with five prisoners under 25 years of age and seven between the ages of 26-35. The remaining six prisoner respondents were between the age of 36 and 61 with a fairly even spread across this range. As outlined above this, distribution is reflective of the significance of age in determining the social and musical practices of respondents. Similarly the overrepresentation of Black and Mixed-Ethnicity respondents compared to the sample population follows a similar rationale with seven prisoner respondents self-identifying as Black and four as Mixed-Ethnicity compared to the twelve white prisoner respondents. This distribution overrepresents BME prisoners when compared to both the national prison population as well as that of the field and occurs due to the significance of race and regionality which occurred within the prison. These dynamics are outlined more clearly in the findings sections but it is important to emphasise further the limitations of the sample in terms of generalisability and to highlight the purposive nature of the sampling.

Due to the function of the prison as a local establishment taking in residents both pre and post sentencing prisoner respondents tended either to be on remand or serving short and mid-length sentences. Short sentences were defined for the purpose of this project as being less than a year with mid-length sentences defined as between one and five years, and long sentences defined as longer than five years. These definitions may differ from other studies or official reports but reflect the distribution of sentence types within HMP South-Hill. Seven prisoner respondents were serving either short-term sentences or were awaiting sentencing while 11 respondents were on mid-length sentences. A further seven out of the 26 prisoner respondents were serving long-term sentences which varied in tariff between five and 30 years. Additionally, one IPP prisoner was interviewed. This relatively even distribution across sentence types was aimed at gathering a range of experiences and testing the significance of sentence as a determining force in the daily-life of the prison.

In addition to sentence-length/type, sentence stage proved to be a useful and important frame for making sense of the ways in which prisoners made sense of and adapted to their environments. HMP South Hill was a transient environment that tended to take prisoners both at

the beginning and end of their sentences and, as chapter 5 will show, this could create tension. Out of 26 prisoners, ten were at early stages, six at mid stages, and ten in their late stages.

As outlined briefly above, residential houseblocks constituted the principal sampling strategy in the first part of the study and continued to play a role towards the end. While these were often fluid with prisoners frequently changing or being moved there was an effort to sample from each of the main residential areas within the prison. The prison was split between general and vulnerable populations which seemed to exercise the most differentiation at the level of houseblock. However, prisoners would often refer to some houseblocks as more lively or preferable than others. Each houseblock was sampled with one respondent from houseblock 5 and between two to four from every other houseblock except for houseblock 3 from where 13 prisoner respondents were recruited. As outlined above, a key reason for this distribution was the desire to examine the geography and social life of the prison at a more granular 'spur-level'.

Every officer interviewed was under the age of 35 and White with two self-identifying as female and two as male. The age of the prisoners represented the split between new and experienced staff within the prison with every officer interviewed having worked at the prison for no more than a year. While more experienced officers were approached there seemed to be a reluctance for involvement in the research amongst this group.

The following table provides an overview of the respondents sampled including both prisoners and prison officers. Two interviews were not transcribed due to the quality of the recordings and in these cases the respondents have not been attributed pseudonyms. Pseudonyms were chosen through random name generation.

Pseudonym	Age	Sentence Length/Type	Sentence Stage	Houseblock	Ethnicity
Callum	26-35	Mid	Mid	4	White
Carl	36-45	Long (IPP)	Late	4	White
Charles	55+	Mid	Early	6	White
David	26-35	Short (Unsentenced)	Early	2	White

Devonte	26-35	Short (Remand)	Early	1	Black
Edward	26-35	Mid	Late	3	White
Elias	<25	Short (Recall)	Early		Mixed
George	26-35	Long	Late	1	Black
Harvey	<25	Mid	Early	3	White
Jack	46-55	Long	Early	3	White
Liam	26-35	Short	Mid	3	White
Marcus	<25	Short	Early	3	Black
Neil	46-55	Short (Remand)	Early	6	White
Nick	26-35	Short	Late	3	White
Ollie	26-35	Mid	Late	3	White
Ron	46-55	Mid	Mid	4	Black
Shaun	46-55	Short	Mid	4	Mixed
Steve	46-55	Long	Early	3	White
Terry	46-55	Short	Late	5	White
Tobias	<25	Long	Early	4	Black
Tom	<25	Mid	Early	3	Black
Trevor	55+	Mid	Late	2	White
Zach	26-35	Mid	Late	3	Mixed
[Unusable Interview]	26-35	Long	Early	2	Mixed
[Unusable Interview]	36-55	Mid	Mid	6	White

Officers	/	/	/	/	/
Jordan	26-35	/	/	/	White
Louise	<25	/	/	/	White
Rob	26-35	/	/	/	White
Vicky	<25	/	/	/	White

Fig 3.1

3.2.7 Interviews

Thirty interviews were conducted, and these were recorded using a personal Dictaphone. In addition to the Dictaphone, a notepad was kept in order to aid with prompting by recording key themes and comments. For the initial interviews, a room was set aside in the Resettlement hub and prisoners were requested via the internal communication system that alerted both them and the prison officers on their cell that they had been given an appointment. These interviews were scheduled in the morning and, after completing the first three interviews and discussing this arrangement with other respondents further, it was decided that this time and location was disruptive for prisoners who would otherwise be at work or education, or using the time for laundry, showers, or making calls to their relatives. Subsequently, interviews were arranged in the afternoons on resident's houseblocks during bang-up where the majority would be locked in their cell. This was not only more convenient but also acted as an inducement for some as it would allow them additional time outside of their cells. Interviews tended to be held in an empty room in the entrance area of the houseblock which were frequently used for private meetings with prisoners and group-based activities. In other instances, interviews were conducted in other empty offices on houseblocks and, in one instance, in the workshop offices. It was common for social dynamics to interfere with these interviews as the majority of the rooms had glass windows which allowed residents passing by to look in. Interviews were often interrupted by associates of the interviewee with a mixture of humour, mischief, and concern for the interviewee. Handling these interactions often proved challenging and maintaining the discretion of the interview as it transitioned quickly from a private to a public interaction could place strain on process of building rapport. Furthermore, undertaking interviews at this time required an officer to unlock the interviewees from their cells, after which I would escort them to the interview room and lock the door; while

resident interviewees rarely commented on this dynamic and seemed accepting of the arrangement, tensions did emerge in some instances where clear animosity between prison officers and residents was expressed and I was required to assume a complex posture of neutrality.

Interviewees were given an information sheet (appendix 1) detailing the aims of the research, their rights as a respondent, and my independence from the prison. Interviewees were then asked to sign a consent form (appendix 2) and provide me with their age, sentence length, sentence stage and ethnicity. As mentioned above, respondents were asked to suggest a song of importance to them on their recruitment forms and, after their demographic details were collected, the song they identified - which had been burned onto a CD - was then played on a stereo CD-player. The rationale behind this was to elicit emotional and biographic reflections from respondents and to provide a direct point of reference on which to base questions about their use of music. The first question of the interview would tend to be "what do you like about that song?" and this shared reference point was often effective at building rapport. In these cases, the music provided a basis from which to build trust and represent myself as a music fan in addition to a researcher. Levell (2019) has recently described the value of using music as an elicitation tool, illustrating how this practice can aid in communication between respondent and interviewer, provide access to memories, and also enable the interviewee to feel more in control of the interview, its pace, and narrative structure. Levell's approach profited from greater flexibility and access to musical forms and in practice, the benefits of the use of music in the current study was highly variable. Despite this, the benefits outlined in Levell's account occurred across a number of respondents and musical elicitation provided a flexible tool for interviewing.

The interviews were semi-structured and based around themes which emerged from the data as well as the existing literature. The benefit of using a semi-structured approach was that it allowed the interview schedule (appendix 4) to be responsive to the respondent (in Gilbert, 2001) and pursue lines of discussion that constituted 'emergent' (Charmaz, 2006:7) data. This approach was particularly useful in translating the particularities of respondents use of music, as well as their conceptualisation of its properties and effects, as these tended to be highly variable across interviews. As outlined above the research was split in to four phases to allow for the incorporation of data into the research methodology, however a number of themes remained consistent throughout the course of the interviews. Interviews would tend to begin with a discussion of the song chosen by the respondent which would often elicit biographical reflections or particular memories. Interrogating these memories would lead to discussions about the relation between music and the self as well as the musical practices of the respondents. Here the questions sought

to elicit a kind of 'theory of music' from the perspective of the respondent by identifying how they conceptualised music, in what ways it was perceived to have agency, and where it was perceived to be most important. Having established this, examples of musical practice both within and outside the prison would be considered. These examples would differ depending on the respondent and the stage of the research as new data came to influence the theoretical questions of the research in an abductive manner (Charmaz, 2006).

The interviews were perceived along Love's (2012) terms as 'co-creations', in which the inter-personal dynamics between interviewer and respondent were understood to influence the way in which the interview unfolded. Drawing on my own experiences as well as my observations within the prison the interviews sought to establish a space in which respondents were able to tell their stories and in which the meanings of these stories could be discussed and inter-subjectively interpreted.

3.3 Analysis

Latour describes one of the important roles of ANT in terms of letting 'the actors have some room to express themselves' (2005:142) and, as outlined above, this is achieved through the rejection of *a priori* assumptions about actors and fields in favour of an inductive, actor led, approach. In many ways, the aims of ANT as a methodological orientation are similar to those of Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Charmaz, 2006), which provides the systematised basis for the analysis of the data in this project. Both approaches do not define themselves in terms of positive theoretical statements, but rather methodological orientations aimed at removing theoretical bias from the practice of data gathering. Both theories advocate for inductive approaches, supported by 'simultaneous involvement in data gathering and analysis' (Strauss & Corbin 1994, in Charmaz 2006:5). Furthermore, the use of memos and fieldnotes throughout the research process as a means of rendering the research process open to re-construction is advocated by both approaches. Finally, both approaches are organised around the generation of theory and emphasise the detailed, description-led approach towards data gathering and analysis. While analytical practice is entwined within the data gathering process, a systematic approach to generating theory is employed after the data has been gathered. This process is constituted by various stages of coding where the data is reviewed, and organisational categories are developed. Based on a range of existing studies (e.g. Kraal, 2007; Lorenz, 2008; Lippert, 2014) that illustrated

the compatibility between these approaches in a practical sense, a grounded theory approach was taken to the analysis of the data.

As Charmaz (2006) outlines in *Constructing Grounded Theory*, the first stage is 'open' or 'initial coding', where the data is reviewed in detail and coded in reference to the contents of the data rather than any existing theory. The second stage is 'focussed coding' where more general categories are created from the more descriptive initial codes with the aim of building conceptual structures that apply throughout the data. Following this, 'Axial coding' seeks to bring back into relation the distinct 'focussed' categories by delving into them, exploring their constitutive parts, and developing relationships between extant codes. The emphasis in 'Axial coding' is the analysis of the data by creating new angles and frames of comparison. Finally, 'theoretical coding' aims at representing a large and consistent picture of the data by connecting the larger 'focussed codes' together. Theoretical coding aims to construct a theoretical model through which to understand the data as a whole.

Once the transcriptions were completed these procedures were followed in order. The initial phase of open coding was oriented around gaining a close familiarity with the data and involved reviewing the data and summarising the views and actions of the respondents line by line. The rationale here was to decontextualize the data from the theoretical assumptions which were generated through completion of the field work and to re-engage in a detailed and neutral way with the raw data. After this was complete, the data were analysed via NVivo 11 in the focussed coding stage and a wide range of themes were articulated within the software. This process involved the establishment of important theoretical relationships – for example, the relation between age and music taste within the prison – but also served as a means of ordering the data into a categorised database. Throughout this process, extensive memos were made in order to document the process of analysis and render the process re-traceable. The software proved restricting in some regards and in particular in the capacity to establish complex relations between themes within the research. As such, the analysis was assisted using mind maps (Appendix 5) which helped to represent the heterogeneous and overlapping nature of prison life. This practice constituted part of the stage of axial coding where data situated and framed from different perspectives and angles. Being able to visually represent important features of prison life which emerged from the interviews allowed greater scope for recontextualization and comparison as relationships which might otherwise not emerge through coding could be visually apprehended through the mind map. The final stage of coding involved the synthesis of focussed codes into a

series of key findings. These were elaborated and explored through extensive written notes which came to constitute the following findings chapters.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

3.4.1 Ensuring the well-being of participants

The interviews could often touch upon sensitive and uncomfortable topics for respondents and care was given to ensure that they felt in control of proceedings. Respondents were made aware at the beginning of the interview that they were free to stop the interview at any point and, in instances of distress, respondents were reminded of this before continuing. Given the largely unstructured nature of the interview it was easy to retain an awareness of the emotional dynamics of the interview and where difficult emotions arose, it was possible to offer comfort and direct the interview in less challenging directions. In this respect the interviews were directed to end on more positive topics such as post-release plans or movements to lower category prisons. After the interviews, respondents were encouraged to make contact via letter if they had any further questions or requirements via the university.

A key strategy for ensuring the wellbeing of respondents was to exercise care in sampling and where reason to believe that respondents were particularly vulnerable existed, either through conversations with them or through comments made by staff, such individuals were excluded from the sample. Judging this was complex, however, and it became clear that the majority of respondents would be perceived as 'vulnerable' in some respect according to most metrics. Furthermore, respondents often found the interview to be therapeutic and operating according to this exclusion criteria risked prioritising those who were likely to benefit from the interview least. While individuals were excluded from the sample for reasons of vulnerability, then, this practice proved more complex than anticipated, and represents an important lesson going forward in ethical sampling and recruitment practices.

Keeping appointments with prisoners was a continual challenge and highlighted the need for understanding of the specific dynamics of the prison. Often interviews would have to be rescheduled due to delays to the regime or demands placed on prisoners. In one instance an

interview was cut short in order to allow the respondent to take back his library books. Understanding the significance that incurring a fine might have on his weekly spends, and hence his well-being over the following week, it was clear that the interview would have to be re-scheduled. Instances like this were frequent and ethical research practice was a continuous process requiring constant reflection and consideration of the dynamics of the prison. Sensitivity was also required during observation and evening walking along the walkway with prisoners to work and education presented the potential for harm.

As outlined above, the upper walkway provided a means to attain a form of immersion into the social and affective dynamics of the prison without intruding on the privacy of prisoners by walking outside their cells or being overly conspicuous. However, as greater sensitivity was gained to the social life of the walkway, it became clear that my presence was inhibiting certain practices and conversations during a period of the day that held significance for prisoners. Most notably, the walkway was a place where drug deals would often take place and my sensitivity to the environment made this increasingly apparent to me as I walked along. This positioned me in a difficult situation as my presence may have confounded some of these drug deals, leaving prisoners who relied on them, in the complex and ambivalent way that many did, without any means of 'removal' (Goffman, 1962). Harm is clearly a complex idea in this context due to the harm that drugs and the system that supplied it caused within the prison, but it was felt that to inhibit daily life in this way went against the ethical and methodological aims of the investigation.

3.4.2 Securely Recording the Data

Interview data was recorded using a Dictaphone and was kept securely throughout the duration of the research to avoid breaches of the Data Protection Act (2018). Respondents' names were anonymised and any identifying details about the prisoners such as locations, events, friends, and relations were changed to prevent identification. Furthermore, the identity of the prison has been obscured in an attempt to maintain the anonymity of respondents and staff-members who appear throughout the fieldnotes. As mentioned above, interviews were undertaken in private locations within the prison and the confidentiality of the interviews was maintained throughout. Where respondents referred to each other (which was often the case), care was given to ensure that no details were revealed and that views were kept anonymous. Respondents agree that data

would be kept for a period of five years after the completion of the doctorate, at which point any data recorded on paper would be shredded, and any data stored on computer hardware would be destroyed using specialised software.

3.4.3 Informed and Voluntary Consent

Respondents were advised of their rights at the start of the interview via an information sheet (see Appendix 1) and were asked to sign a consent form (see Appendix 2) agreeing to the use of their data for the purposes of the research. Prisoners were asked to keep the information form which included contact information and advised of their rights to withdraw from the research. Space was made at the beginning of the interviews to discuss any of the points outlined in the literature and, given the notorious low rates of literacy within prisons (Social Exclusion Unit, 2002), interviewees were given the option of having the information sheet read to them, to ensure that fully informed consent was obtained. Respondents were informed of research obligations to the institution in terms of non/disclosure of details from interviews and were advised of instances where their confidentiality would not be maintained (specifically arising from concerns about harm caused to themselves or anyone else).

3.5 Limitations of the Research Method

In addition to the limitations inherent to the quasi-ethnographic approach, the use of a single site limits the extent to which the findings outlined throughout this thesis can be generalised across the broader prison estate of England and Wales. Furthermore, the number of interviews renders generalisation even within the prison limited and it is clear that this thesis offers by no means an exhaustive account of the experiences, uses, and role of music at HMP South Hill. The sampling strategy aimed to capture insight into a range of distinct cultural structures within the prison as they emerged, exploring the way that race, region, age, sentence length came to inflect the ways in which individuals constructed themselves in relation to the prison. However, each of these elements deserve further examination on their own terms as the exploratory nature of the study has emphasised including a breadth of social and cultural subjectivities rather than exploring distinctive positions in detail.

Additionally, the inductive nature of the investigation has placed greater emphasis on my interpretations of the field, meaning that each phase of the investigation has been influenced by

my own subjective position. The limitations inherent to this style of research can be mitigated through seeking to account, to the greatest extent possible, for one's subjective positionality as well as by rendering the research process as transparent and reflexive as possible.

3.6. Reflexivity and Positionality

In the years leading up to the research I sought as much contact with prisons as possible, taking any opportunity to attend conferences, third-sector events, and research trips as possible. My first visit to a prison was in 2009 as part of a trip organised by my university to HMP Wandsworth. This visit was striking but in the years between then and 2015 when I commenced my research, I had not considered prisons in any detail. Being principally interested in the theoretical implications of the topic at the time, my motivations for undertaking this investigation seemed often at odds with my colleagues whose passion for social justice was both inspiring and occasionally dispiriting. There were instances in the early parts of my research where I felt as if I lacked the empathy and sense of injustice displayed so eloquently by my colleagues and that my theoretical interest in the prison was purely instrumental.

In the face of danger and discomfort Alison Liebling (1999) asks 'why do people do research in prisons?' In her discussion, she identifies the intensity of human experience that emerges from imprisonment, describing how '[b]oth extremes of human nature - good and evil - are present in perhaps their starkest forms' (1999:152) and suggests that a 'curiosity about the human spirit and the institutions we create' may drive people to undertake research in these places. My first sustained visit to a prison was at HMPYOI Feltham in winter of 2015 where I assisted a colleague in distributing and collecting surveys for her fieldwork. In order to improve rates of response we would attempt to briefly explain the fieldwork and the rationale behind the survey and engage with the would-be respondent. This was a challenging and profoundly affecting experience and represented my first real interaction with the worst sides of the prison system. Throughout the course of the day I came into close contact with drug abuse, self-harm, extreme distress and felt profoundly uncomfortable on numerous instances. Subsequently I took part in a critical reading group with another doctoral peer who was present during the Feltham trip at HMP Swaleside in Kent where I experienced more of the extreme ambivalence which Liebling refers to. Here, however, more of the humour and joy that somehow manages to endure within these establishments

seemed to emerge in the various classrooms we inhabited. The conversations with the men, based around sociological and philosophical concepts, were sometimes bleak, challenging, vulnerable, but always human and immediate. The time would slip by and before we knew it, we were making our way through to the main gate to de-brief in a nearby pub. Here we would reflect on our positionality, on the complexities of discussing topics where we were assumed to have authority and the problems of this status within the broader framework of the institution. It was in these instances that I was able to begin to understand the relationships of power within the prison and though the difficulties, discomforts and ambivalences of undertaking research, perhaps necessarily, never fully receded, these experiences helped me to make sense of them as they occurred. Furthermore, I began to see that my motivations to undertake research in a prison were not the dispassionate and touristic study of music under specific circumstances, but rather, as Liebling describes, as something closer to a 'curiosity about the human spirit' (Liebling, 1999:152).

3.6.1 Positionality

As Jewkes (2011:67) suggests, 'subject positions are relational, contingent, and continually being formed and reformed in research' and this claim held strongly throughout the current study. As a non-uniformed, key holder, who prison residents were unfamiliar with I tended to attract curiosity. When I explained my research to residents, I would get a range of responses and in many cases the assumption was that I was working for a third-sector organisation and was seeking to implement a music-based intervention. When I explained that my work was more exploratory and oriented around the daily life of the prison, responses were more variable. While some immediately recognised this frame in terms of the assistance which music provided in 'doing your sentence', others were less charitable and saw my research either in terms of a positivistic study of how 'criminals' consume music, or as something entirely pointless. The subject position I was trying to convey as an independent, sympathetic, and curious researcher did not appear to fit into an existing typology for the majority of those that I spoke to and, as such, I felt the need manage the way I presented myself and the research.

Age appeared to play some role in how I was perceived amongst older and younger prisons and occasional respondents would question me about this. For older prisoners in particular I seemed to appear older than I was and revealing my age was occasionally met with what I interpreted to be muted disappointment. Due perhaps to the large percentage of new uniformed

staff, I was perceived as a senior figure and would frequently be referred to as sir, or 'gov' when greeting prison officers. Jewkes (2011) refers to the ways in which gender can come to influence a researcher's reception within the prison, describing how female researchers can struggle to be 'taken seriously' within the traditionally 'male dominated' environment. As a middle-class, white, male researcher presenting in a conventionally masculine way, I often felt that I was taken *too* seriously and afforded more licence than my level of comfort within the institution necessarily allowed. However, I also felt as if my male interviewees were revealing attitudes and opinions to me that they otherwise may not have done with a female interviewer, as some would make direct appeals to my gender as a preface to sexist comments. As Pearson (1993) suggests, our subjective positions can preclude us from accessing certain types of data from the field and in this respect both my class-position and race may have inflected my interpretations of the multicultural (Phillips, 2012) and predominantly working-class (Jewkes, 2005) society of the prison.

As Chapter 6 will explore in detail, the question of race was a complex feature of the investigation and for many, it was closely tied to region and age. For younger prisoners from inner-city areas, regional cultural affiliation was often a nearer proxy for a range cultural experiences than race. Many respondents had grown up in multicultural areas and, in this respect, my status as someone who was born in London (admittedly Greenwich) provided some shared cultural points of reference. However, it is clear that privileges relating to my class and race mean that my capacity to analyse BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) cultures is limited by my positionality.

Music provided a useful tool here for bridging people's expectations with my hopes for the research. Describing the research more in terms of a conversation about music led to better responses and questions about the importance of music lead to impassioned responses amongst many of the residents I spoke to. Here, I was able to situate myself less as a researcher and more as a music fan, curious about the tastes, cultures, and practices that constitute the basis of a 'good conversation' about music. As a musician and a passionate consumer of music, this subject position was initially not hard to assume, but as I engaged in more detail with the prison's cultural life I found that my understanding of certain genres became a limiting factor in this regard; perhaps nowhere was this more obvious than within the context of drill. The predominance of drill music within the prison meant that in order to maintain engagement with respondents via music, I needed to understand and relate to their tastes to some extent. As such, I sought a deeper understanding of the sound, nature and historical context of UK Rap and Drill as well as Grime and Garage. Where I had assured myself of being literate in these terrains through a longstanding interest in Hip-Hop, it became quickly clear that my points of reference were somewhat outmoded, and not shared

amongst younger respondents. While I did not want to appear inauthentic, having only recently begun to listen to their music, it seemed important to express some familiarity with these emergent genres and their cultural and regional contexts.

There were, however, clear limitations in the capacity of music to bridge diversity in lived experiences and my capacity to interpret and represent the views of others was inhibited in various ways. Despite the presence of numerous frank discussions about race within the data, my positionality as a white male likely influenced the content of these interactions or precluded me from fully apprehending the significance or meaning behind various utterances. This presented a challenge when seeking to reflect the relations of race and regionality as they related to music within the prison as these constituted a key feature of the findings. While others would have been better placed than me to make sense of the ideas and practices of my respondents by drawing on a greater cultural and social proximity to their lived experiences, I felt a tension between my own shortcomings in this regard and the need to report my findings as they occurred. This tension remains unresolved and, as such, it is important to emphasise the limitations of my positionality, particularly as it relates to the findings outlined in Chapter 6.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has sought to outline the theoretical frameworks on which the research is based and to illustrate how these ideas were integrated into the methodology. Additionally, the chapter has aimed to paint a preliminary picture of the research site and the particular features which played a determinant role in guiding the research. As a methodology which sought to systematically adapt to the contours of the site and its inhabitants it is important to document the ways in which decisions were made and the ways in which positionality, ethics, and the emergent data came to effect the overall outcomes.

Chapter 4

Coping with Confinement

Introduction

According to the Prison Reform Trust (2019), prisoners serving in 'local' prisons – that is, those short-term establishments receiving individuals directly from sentencing – are likely to be confined to their cell for the majority of the day, citing findings from HM Inspectorate of Prisons that 37% of prisoners in these settings spend less than two hours out of their cell. However, the same report reveals that even in 'training' prisons such as HMP South Hill – where the majority of people serve the bulk of their custodial sentence, ostensibly in order to 'work and reduce their risk of reoffending' (p.49) – approximately a fifth of prisoners were locked in their cell for 22 hours a day.

Given what we know of the broader pains of imprisonment, as well as the specific challenges of solitary confinement - both of which were explored in the literature review – we might expect this extended deprivation of liberty to feature heavily in studies of prison life in England and Wales. However, compared to the significant body of studies examining the social and psychological dynamics occurring across broader segments of time, space and place in carceral settings, and those exploring the extreme conditions of solitary confinement, the specific and isolated experience of regular 'confinement' to one's cell in medium-secure settings is less commonly the focus within current prison research.

In order to redress this balance, this chapter is oriented around the lived experience of long-term, intermittent cellular confinement at HMP South Hill and the ways in which music was used to manage the extended hours which prisoners residing there spent locked in their cells.

4.1 Context, and the pains of confinement at HMP South Hill

At the time of the study, HMP South Hill had taken on a large number of new prison officers as part of a national response to the wave of riots that had occurred over the previous year over several establishments across the prison estate of England and Wales (BBC, 2016). While South Hill was officially operating at above-capacity staffing levels, high rates of sick leave and the inexperience of large numbers of newer staff meant that the regime operated at understaffed levels when senior officers were absent (Observations from Inspection Meeting, fieldnotes. 9/5/2018). When understaffing was at its most extreme, the prisons planned activities or 'regime' would be curtailed and all activities save for the most essential work (such as kitchen work, where the prisoners' meals were cooked) would be cancelled for the afternoon, leaving even those with places in work or education unable to leave their cells for long periods of the day. During some periods of the study, it was common for the regime to be curtailed multiple times within a week and it was clear that the halting and unpredictable rhythm of daily life was causing frustration among the residents of South Hill.

Prisoners would often complain about the long waiting lists for places in the education department and classes such as music technology were oversubscribed, leaving prisoners to wait sometimes for months to get onto courses. While internal issues within the management and staffing of HMP South Hill were clearly a significant factor, this inefficiency was also connected to broader challenges for the prison management. Most notably, HMP South Hill was set to shift from a Category B local prison, to a Category C training prison and had begun to take on more Category C prisoners from the local area. These prisoners were reaching the end of their sentence and required vocational training opportunities to prepare them for release. However, as this category shift had been set back on numerous occasions, the resulting uncertainty about the status of the prison had left many of the administrative staff unable to provide enough activities which were suitable to this population. At the time of the study, one member of the senior management team noted in conversation that the regime at South Hill had a deficit of over 500 places on work and education, which represented almost half of the prisoner population (Observations from Inspection Meeting, fieldnotes. 9/5/2018). Without meaningful or purposeful activities to attend, and facing a deficit in safe levels of staffing, significant numbers of individuals serving terms at South Hill found themselves consistently spending up to 23 hours a day locked in their cells. Additionally, the

absence of appropriate work opportunities gave prisoners little chance to prove themselves as responsible and engaged, effectively disqualifying them from accessing higher levels of entitlement as part of the Incentive and Earned Privileges scheme and responsibility, despite their best intentions. Remarks from prisoners expressing their frustration with this situation and links to the impending regime change were common during the fieldwork period; for example, Ron [50's, Unsented] commented that he was fed up with staff "going on" about the prison being re-roled to a C category establishment and seemingly empty promises that 'everything's going to be different'. Making explicit reference to the common practice of cellular confinement in the absence of anything useful to offer residents, Ron concluded that the staff were 'talking rubbish'; that all they were interested in was just that they have 'got you behind the door' and out of their way.

These increasingly frequent and lengthy periods of confinement to one's cell, referred to by prisoners as 'bang-up', were experienced as a tense combination of boredom, anxiety and disempowerment, and much of the day-to-day activity of prisoners was oriented around mitigating these pains.

4.1.2 The Temporal Pains of Imprisonment

Michel Foucault (1977) describes how disciplinary power is expressed over prisoners through the control of time and this was evident in numerous accounts of residents living at HMP South Hill. For Harvey time was a central axis in his feelings of disempowerment:

I can't do nothing with the time. Time in here is irrelevant to me if I can't do nothing with it...Time is just the format of what time things get done. [Pause] It's just the regime... Time is when things get done. Time is not when you do things.

(Harvey, 20's, Early-Stage, Mid-Length)

O'Donnell (2004) refers to the way that prison's unique 'timescape' radically alters people's relationship to time, describing this shift as a loss of 'sovereignty'. This can be seen in Harvey's account where time is perceived in relation to agency and becomes 'irrelevant' to him when agency is removed or suppressed. The necessity of following the institutional timetable was a fundamental feature of daily life and every aspect of resident's days, including their most basic bodily drives, were governed by a 'format' over which they had little control. As Harvey illustrates, residents came to perceive time as something to endure, rather than to spend (Wahidin, 2004; O'Donnell, 2014).

Wahidin (2004) describes this as the experience 'disciplinary time', which seeks to influence the subject by manifesting deeply embodied responses to an institutionally defined pattern of events. Time can also be mobilised as a means of coercion in a more relative way, Wahidin notes, by extending periods of confinement and suspending valued activities as further punishment.

Sorokin and Merton's (1937, cit. in O'Donnell, 2014), distinction between 'clock time' and 'social time' is a useful way of making sense of the relativistic nature of time within the prison. 'Clock time' describes the standardised and scientific measurement of time using measuring instruments, while 'social time' refers to the more abstract, subjective and socially constructed form of time wherein actors situate themselves in reference to particular events and phenomena.

O'Donnell's (2014) concept of 'prison time' builds on this latter aspect, highlighting the locally determined character of 'social time' in carceral settings, and describes how time systems come to be determined by reference to different topographies of temporal flows. For residents at HMP South Hill, for instance, those keeping note of 'prison time' tended to focus less on the minutes and hours of the working day as non-prisoners might, but instead reimagined the passage of time in different terms. Oli [20's, Late-Stage, Long-Length], who was at the late stage of a long-sentence, described a disengagement with the future, allowing days and months to go by without considering the date. Periodically he would situate himself in relation to his sentence; "sometimes I'll sit there and I'll go 'well how long actually have I got left?' So by the time June comes I'll go, June, July, October..and I'll count it up like that. But through my sentence, I've sort of tried to forget about time..."

The seasons also took on a significant role in determining the shape of life at the prison, and patterns of activity were the clearest indication of its effect. Prison officers perceived the summer as a more fractious season for prisoners, and Rob [30's], a staff member, elaborated on the role of the weather in determining the mood of the prison:

I think the hotter, and the better the day is, the more aggravated [the prisoners] get. Yeah and I dunno whether this is because they can't be out there enjoying it...the heat plays a big part, erm, the heat sends them crazy man. **(Rob, 30's, prison officer)**

Rob's theory was corroborated by Oli who described the ambivalence of the summer weather from a prisoner's perspective:

While people get naturally happier when the sun's out, [as a prisoner] you sort of feel like you're missing out more, because the sun's out. So it's almost like a bittersweet thing. You're like "ah look the sun's out" but, "oh what could I be doing if I was outside? **(Oli, 20's, resident)**

Thoughts such as these were commonly referred to by prisoners whose dislocation from family, friends, and the comforts of the outside would often cause feelings of longing and distress. Tom [20's, Early-Stage, Mid-Length], for instance, described feeling 'stressed' as a result of being apart from his son, and described this as his principal reason for distress, stating "If I never had a son it would be [so hard], I just think about him every day". Yearly events such as Christmas and birthdays were known to be difficult times for prisoners as they tended to evoke painful thoughts amongst prisoners by emphasising their distance, both spatially and temporally, from their loved ones [Conversation with LSM, Fieldnotes, 12/12/2017].

While time cohered to this relative structure in many ways, clock-time maintained an important role within the context of cellular confinement. Liam [Short-Length, Mid-Stage] describing the frustration he had found prior to attaining a clock describing painful instances where he would overestimate the amount of time passed; "When we didn't have a clock we used to knock on the cell, get a screw [prison officer] over [and ask] [...] 'What's the time sir?' We're thinking we'll be let out in 10 minutes, he goes 'You've got another hour till you're out'." Instances such as this proved particularly difficult as they disjointed the perceived flow of time, bringing residents awareness back towards the reality of clock time which contrasted painfully with their expectations. As section 4.4 will discuss in more detail, the importance of owning a clock was that it provided a means of co-ordinating in-cell activities such as television and radio, which themselves cohered to a static timeframe, around prison time by enabling prisoners to plan their time and establish their own temporal orders within the constraints of prison time.

While the focus of this chapter is confinement, it is important to underline how the relationship with time becomes fundamentally altered within the prison as this relationship is most pronounced during the periods of the day where prisoners are locked in their cells. The following section will seek to describe in more detail the particular challenges that derive from cellular confinement before outlining some of the ways that prisoners at HMP South Hill sought to cope with these conditions.

4.1.3 Space, Body and Mind

The monotony of the prison regime and the difficulty of finding meaningful or sustained diversion from the limited range of activities provided by the regime meant that boredom was a continual threat to residents. Despite the continual references to boredom in both institutional and academic literature as a causal factor in offending behaviour (Ferrel, 2004; HMPPS 2019b), as well as feelings of anxiety and distress amongst prisoners (Vandebosch 2001; Liebling 1999), as Knight (2015) notes, this feature of confinement has never been the focus of any academic research on prisons. Due to the acute shortage of purposeful activity HMP South Hill which would allow residents more time out of their cell, respondents would often describe feeling bored. Charles [Short-Length, Early-Stage], a resident in his 60's who had recently arrived at South Hill, described boredom as the 'worst thing' about prison life and explained how the power would sometimes go out on his spur, leaving him sitting in darkness 'crying out for some kind of stimulation'. Situations such as these were by no means a daily occurrence; however, Charles' account illustrates how vulnerable prisoners were to the painful experience of sensory deprivation. While most prisoners at South Hill shared cells and were hence able to rely on their cellmates for company, prisoners such as Charles who lived alone would often refer to their feelings of loneliness and isolation. While Terry [40's, Mid-Length, Late Stage] acknowledged the difficulties of close cohabitation in terms of 'sharing things' and having to 'deal' with 'other people's problems', he also acknowledged the boredom and loneliness of single occupancy; ("if you're in the cell alone, you're by yourself and that's it, you're just [alone]").

Liam articulated the fear that under-stimulation would risk a decline in their mental health; "Locked up in your cell by yourself, especially if you haven't got no cellmate. You'd end up going mad wouldn't ya?" Elias [20's, Early-Stage, Recall], who shared a cell, also related boredom to the fear of 'going mad' and described the effects of extended periods of confinement on him and his cellmate "...we're in our cell for 22 hours a day. The shit we do in there, we do some weird shit, we do some crazy shit." These fears are redolent of Richard's (1978) study of long-term imprisonment which investigated themes such as the extent to which prisoners feared 'becoming a vegetable' and Cohen and Taylor (1972) also illustrate similar fears relating to mental decline.

Delays and alterations to the regime were a more common reason for distress and prisoners would sometimes be locked in their cells for up to 28 hours at a stretch from midday on

Sunday through to mid-afternoon on the Monday. Despite having a television and occasionally a newspaper, Charles described feeling 'sore just from sitting' during these extended periods of confinement, stating "it's not as if you can get up and move around (laughs) there's not a huge amount of space to move around in". While confinement had profound implications for prisoner's mental well-being, as related above, Charles' account illustrates how these periods were felt in ways that were *physically* as well as emotionally and psychologically painful, as prisoners were forced to engage in a limited set of activities which tended to enforce particular postures or physical relations. Steve [40's, Long-Length, Early-Stage] described his experience of long-term cellular confinement in visceral terms, referring to the sense of isolation and anxiety he felt when officers would take more than ten minutes to respond to his cell bell. He complained, "It's horrible! My wife even says to me, "well what happens if?" I struggle sometimes digesting food, she said 'What happens if you choke?' [and I replied] 'I've got to press the bell'". For those prisoners with fears about their health, the dependency on prison officers played heavily on their minds and those of their loved ones, and Steve's feelings of anxiety were clearly intensified by the feelings of distrust he had in the institution to ensure his well-being. These accounts guard us against dualistic thinking in characterising the experience of confinement. As many of the quotes suggest, the physical and mental discomforts referred to by prisoners were tightly enmeshed and were often experienced as continuities of each other.

For younger prisoners, the physical manifestations of the pains of cellular confinement could be seen in responses to the absence of space and the build-up of mental and physical energy experienced during this form of restricted living. Managing this economy of energy was important and, as Edward [20's, Mid-Length, Late-Stage] explained, the cramped conditions of the cell were an added source of anxiety and frustration; "I like to be active, so being in a place like this as well, it's really frustrating for a person like me. Cos I'm locked behind that door 24/7, it's driving me mental. So I can't sit and concentrate with the TV because I'm thinking about things."

Harvey [20's, Mid-Length, Early-Stage] described how he 'basically got the exact same amount of energy at night that you did in the morning', forcing him to reconfigure his circadian rhythm to a '36-hour body clock' as prisoners would often stay up long into the night in order to sleep through particularly inactive periods of the day when they were confined. As the following section will show, however, managing one's sleep was often challenging for residents due to the material and auditory dynamics of the cell. Long periods of inactivity have been linked to depression (Bishwajit et al. 2017) while, conversely, physical activity has been shown to improve mental well-being (Taylor et al. 1985; Harris, 2018). These findings illustrate how the physical pains

of confinement overlapped with the psychological pains and the following discussion seeks to articulate further how these features can be seen as continuous with each other.

4.1.4 The pains of the carceral soundscape

The cells at HMP South Hill were narrow spaces, with thick walls and doors, a bunkbed, desk, and a toilet shielded by a curtain. With these features, the cell provided space enough for one person to stand up on the floor in the middle of the room, meaning that those who shared a cell were forced to coordinate their movement and activities to a large extent. Living in cells originally built for single occupancy, which now predominantly housed two adult males, meant that the social, auditory and sensory experience of the prison were determined to a large extent by one's cellmates and neighbours. Aside from the cramped conditions this spatial configuration meant that prisoners enjoyed little privacy and often suffered a range of indignities from being forced into intimate contact with others on an almost constant basis (Milhaud and Moran, 2013). Studies focussed more broadly at effects of overcrowding have illustrated the heightened risk of poor health, stress, and misconduct (Gaes, 1985; Schaeffer et al. 1988; Sharkey, 2010). Amongst these accounts, noise is frequently referred to as an exacerbating feature of an overcrowded environment and recent research has explored the interaction between residents and their acoustic environment, outlining how the 'soundscape' of the prison (Hemsworth, 2015) can be profoundly disturbing for residents. This section explores the relations between sound, privacy and resident's sense of well-being within the physical space of the cell.

While the walls and doors were thick, the cells at HMP South Hill were permeable with both the cracks in the door and the window allowing sound in. Cells were situated close to each other and prisoners would often shout to each other through these gaps throughout the day and night. For older prisoners like Ron [50's, Unsented], the constancy of this shouting and the banging of cell doors was deeply frustrating, negatively impacting on his ability to sleep at night ('It does your head in mate!...You do hear a lot like...guys banging and, you know, shouting all mad things, you know and you think 'can't you just shut up and go to sleep?!'); however, for others who may have suffered from an inability to sleep in any case, this arrangement was welcome light relief in the early hours, providing humour and gossip to the stimulation-starved ears of those in adjoining cells, with David [30's, Unsented] noting: 'as sad as it sounds, [this is] entertainment sometimes!'. As Hemsworth's (2015) account suggests, however, for some the noise could be profoundly

intimidating and Charles described how the noise on the induction houseblock where prisoners first arrive was 'fantastic' compared to that on vulnerable population wing. During this period Charles [60's, Short-Length, Early-Stage] was locked up for 24 hours a day, presumably for his own protection from the general population prisoners who would often attack VP prisoners. Charles described his 'jaundiced view' of the prison soundscape, describing how he and his associates on the VP houseblock would tend to 'attract attention' from general population prisoners who would shout abuse at them from their cells.

Edward [20's, Mid-Length, Late-Stage], a general population prisoner, stated that he sometimes found it 'difficult to get through the day' and described how the sounds of the spur would accentuate these feeling of distress. He described the busy and cacophonous environment:

...some people make weird noises, some people are banging their door, someone's pressing their bell, someone's chatting to another neighbour next door. There are so many different people doing different things on the wing, and then...so different noises are in the background. (**Edward 20's, Mid-Length, Late-Stage**)

At night, a sparser and more dynamic soundscape emerged. David described the passage of sound through the spur, referring to how the physical properties of the cell created "a weird kind of sound" which would transfer through the cracks in the door and into the large hallway of the spur where it would distort and amplify in the resonant space. At night this was particularly pronounced and even the sound of people talking in their cell would transfer through the spur and into his room. While the shouting of the other residents of South Hill through windows could be largely blocked out by closing one's own window, the noise from the door was perceived as particularly 'annoying' by David as there was little that could be done to avoid it. This feeling of disempowerment seemed most acute during the night-time and prison officers would attempt to police the soundscape to avoid conflict in the morning. Jordan [30's], a prison officer, referred to this as 'volume-control' suggesting that he would avoid asking prisoners to turn their music off completely.

David expressed his frustration with the noise, pointing to the auditory dynamic within the building and the quality of sound;

So they have these low-power speakers, which is annoying enough, and then with this reverb effect, from the cell, and then even more reverb on the spur! So even if it's someone upstairs...if he cranks this all the way up I can hear it very loudly in my cell. And when they listen to some weird stuff like, I dunno, dancehall or something like this...

mean I like it! But I don't like it at 3 in the morning (laughs)!

(David 30's Unsented)

Tom [20's, Mid-Length, Early-Stage], a younger prisoner living in a single cell, similarly referred to the genre of music as a feature of particular annoyance in an instance where he was kept up late into the night by a neighbour. He referred to himself as 'not really a Drum and Bass guy' and explained "I was banging his wall yeah? But it's like, he thought I was banging it in a good way! (laughs) He started banging it back turning up the music!" This sentiment was also expressed by Terry [40's, Mid-Length, Late-Stage] who found music pouring into his cell both 'first-thing in the morning' as well as during the night, preventing him from sleeping. It was clear from the respondents who expressed dismay at the noise of the spur that these objections referred less to the volume of the noise but rather its timing. As David suggested in the quote above, the relative quietness of the night-time meant that sounds which did leak out of the cell-door would be in greater contrast than during the day where background noise would drown it out.

As David's account suggests, music constituted a particular feature within the carceral soundscape, and the accounts indicated that interacted with the spatial and material environment of the spurs in different ways from the other common noises of shouting and banging. Terry referred to the noise of music entering his spur as 'muffley', describing the effects that the thick walls had on the sound and, perhaps, the distance from which he perceived it. Charles also commented on this quality, describing his 'infuriation' at hearing only the 'vibration through a steel building' instead of the music. Charles account is concordant with my observations that the base frequencies of the music would tend to travel further, as Charles suggested, through the metal infrastructure of the prison than other frequencies, leading to a particular type of musical sound. As the following sections explain in more detail, residents would seek to regularise these acoustic dynamics by playing music in their cells, however, Terry's frustration articulates the difficulty faced by those unwilling or unable to adopt this strategy ("[it's] good for them but not for other people".)

To summarise, the experience of confinement could be painful in several ways. Firstly, the cell was a physically constraining environment with limited space for movement and activity. Paired with the difficulty of accessing sources of distraction, the passage of time would, as Wahidin (2004) suggests, appear to slow down, leaving prisoners painfully aware of the duration which they would have to wait until they allowed to leave the restricted space of their cell. Secondly, the long durations of physical constraint meant that prisoners were forced to adapt their embodied rhythms to the disciplinary time of the prison. Thirdly, these feelings existed in relation to the physical

discomfort of the cell, and the sensory features of the material environment which would serve to accentuate undesirable feelings of dislocation, boredom and disempowerment. Finally, this environment, while in itself painful, would also render prisoners vulnerable to unwanted thoughts and feelings. In the cramped and bare environment of the cell, distant from sources of comfort, feelings of anxiety and sadness could become magnified if left un-checked. Having outlined some of the distinct pains associated with long periods of confinement the following section turns to the focus of this chapter; namely, the ways in which prisoners adapted their selves and environment in order to cope with confinement.

4.2 Coping with Confinement

The following section explores the ways in which the men at HMP South Hill sought to acclimatise, guard against, and otherwise manage the all-too-common experience of regular cellular confinement. While such activities as sleep and substance use are discussed here, the aim is to situate these in relation to music in order to consider both the practical and economic dimensions of these distractions as well as to consider the ways in which these practices were assembled together.

4.2.1 Coping through 'removal activities'

As DeNora (2013) states, music can be used to order self and space, creating 'asylums' from challenging or stressful environments. This practice can be seen in Gross' (2014) terms as 'situation modification' or, in Krueger's (2015) terms, as 'reconfiguration' and, given the long hours spent in confinement, prisoners at HMP South Hill relied on these strategies to a large extent. David [30's, Unsentenced] described the 'hectic' atmosphere on his spur when prisoners were let out for evening association. Referring with frustration to the long periods of 'bang-up' he explained, "if you don't work, lock-up is like 22-23 hours per day and when people are opened up to have a shower or associate they are like animals! They run around 'do you have tobacco? do you have drugs?'. These short stretches of time spent outside of the cell took on great significance for prisoners, who would use the time to gather resources through which to handle the ensuing periods of confinement. Goffman (1961) characterised strategies such as these as 'removal activities' which aimed remove sources of pain that would otherwise make the time harder to

endure. Activities such as crafting, drug use, watching television, and writing letters allow prisoners to distract themselves from their immediate situation, 'anaesthetising' (O'Donnell, 2014) themselves from the passage of time and helping them construct routines within the prison. DeNora (2013:49) examines the concept further describing how 'removals' seek to 'dispel unwanted times and realities' by either physically or mentally resituating the actor in an environment more 'conducive to wellbeing'. 'Removal' activities were built into the daily rhythms of the prison to a large extent and due to the difficulty of accessing resources to 'dispel' unwanted time and realities through activities such as sleep – which was both licit and free, if you could get it – and drug use – more expensive but perhaps easier to come by in prison than sleep – were extremely common ways of handling the abundance of time spent in the semi-isolated state of cellular confinement. David described synchronising his sleep patterns with the television schedule in order to avoid the under-stimulating 'day-time' television shows, sleeping through the afternoon and awaking in the evening when the primetime schedule began. He described this in terms of "adapting to the regime" and sought to stay awake as long as possible in the evenings in order to expend energy so as to be tired again in the following afternoon. As the accounts in the previous sections showed, however, sleep was not always a dependable strategy and prisoners could find themselves out of place with both the institutional rhythm as well as that of their cellmates and neighbours.

In such situations, individuals required support in distracting the self and 'suppressing' time and reality (cf. Wright et al., 2017), and this 'support' often manifested in the form of illicit substances. Drugs operated to mitigate this contingency to some extent in similar ways to that identified in Cope's (2015) study of drug use in a Young Offender's Institution, which illustrates how depressant drugs were favoured for their ability to aid young people in sleeping for longer periods, as well as helping them to deploy their attention away from the passing of time. For example, David – who described being an occasional user of various illicit substances – suggested that the use of drugs at HMP South Hill was a crucial means of not simply suppressing but of 'fleeing reality' by providing a temporary escape from the bleak and stressful nature of his immediate surroundings. As Wright et al. note, it is important to distinguish such strategies from 'repression', which centres on the non-acknowledgement of certain emotional states, in order to recognise the ways in which certain adjustment techniques enable prisoners to engage with and manage undesirable thoughts in a dynamic way, allowing them to selectively process certain aspects of their situation at their own pace and according to their own schedule. In this way, both sleep and drugs allow prisoners to selectively engage with their environment in ways which

enhanced or mitigated the experience of long periods of cellular confinement. These strategies, however, relied on the management of various finite resources to which access was not evenly distributed.

For those using sleep as a strategy of removal, attention to one's levels of energy was an important feature as engaging in long periods of sleep could, as Harvey's [20's, Mid-Length, Early-Stage] account in the previous section suggested, leave one feeling awake and energised during extended periods of confinement with no way to expend the surplus energy. Likewise, drugs required not only the consideration of the effects on one's physical and emotional state, but also engagement with the prison's illicit economy. While drug use was normalised to some extent on an individual level, there was a clear sense in which they represented a problem within the prison and several respondents referred to issues of debt and violence as synonymous with drug use ("Drugs come into prison and people get in debts for drugs and getting their heads punched in all the time." George, 30's, Long-Length, Late-Stage)

Beyond the mechanisms of sleeping and obviating time through substance use, the television also occupied a significant place within the range of removal strategies available to prisoners. As David's account above indicated, the television schedule played an important role within the daily rhythms of the prison at large. When the primetime schedule came on in the evening, the television provided a resource for some prisoners to structure their time, and Liam [30's, Short-Length, Mid-Stage] described planning out his evening's entertainment by using television programmes as points of reference:

You find yourself [thinking] 'well I've done that now, I've watched two programmes, now I'm on my 3rd program, now I'm on my 4th program', and it's like watching a very long film with loads of episodes in it, d'you know what I mean? **(Liam, 30's, Short-Length, Mid-Stage)**

The sense of accomplishment expressed in Liam's account illustrates how time management was framed by some as an end in itself, and his approach can be related to O'Donnell's (2014) concept of 'segmentation' wherein prisoners sought to render time manageable by conceptualising it in terms of small segments rather than expansive wholes. Here, we see that while clock time was sometimes a painful and invasive presence in the lives of prisoners, access to a watch could enable forms of agency.

While the television has represented an important resource for prisoners (see Jewkes, 2002), within the context of cellular confinement its material properties would tend to inhibit

certain forms of agency, making some feel in effect more rather than less constrained. For instance, Elias [20's, Recall] expressed his dissatisfaction with the television, referring both to the limited choice and to the repetitive nature of the shows. Referring to the tedious soap operas which many prisoners watched in the evening, and juxtaposing them against his preferred entertainment medium of music, he explained: "Eastenders - the same stuff happens, those shows are rubbish...You see music, it's different innit? It's always new, it's always moving forward, it's always relevant to the times." As Knight's (2014) study of television usage in prison also found, some residents referred to problems with the rhythmic qualities of the television, complaining that the 30-minute segments between advertisements would make them unwillingly more aware of the passage of time ("on TV, you know what the time is. I wouldn't even need to...once Eastenders is finished I already know what time it is. Sometimes you don't even want to know what the time is" Liam).

While it was common for prisoners to watch a handful of shows routinely, to rely on the television too much was perceived by some as a sign of passivity and uncritical acquiescence, as Ollie and Edward explained:

You watch stuff on the news and you think to yourself "okay is that really, is there really a bigger picture behind what you're showing us?" Like, you think that's information, the only information we have is what they feed us. I'm not sure I believe that, you know? **(Ollie, Long-Length, Late-Stage)**

The only time I used to watch television is when I was either stoned off my face (laughs) - no excuses but if I weren't smoking a bit of weed and I weren't with my girlfriend at home I wouldn't watch it...I used to watch it but I'm more of an active person, I'm always on the go. **(Edward ,20's, Mid-Length, Late-Stage)**

As an audio-visual device, the television is designed for an audience to apprehend both sound and vision from a static position. The sound and vision are synchronised and while some programmes do not require the apprehension of both sensory channels, most are made on the basis that the audience is receiving both. This meant that in shared cells, both inhabitants were required either to adopt a position in relation to the television or endure its presence without engaging with it. Combined with the spatial limitations of the cell, this arrangement meant that the television could accentuate feelings of confinement causing tension amongst cellmates. Steve recalled an instance with a previous cellmate whose preference was to watch television throughout the day. As Steve was second to move into the cell, the informal rules of the prison meant that his

cellmate was given priority in deciding how the in-cell entertainment was to be used. Steve found both the constant use of the television frustrating and when tensions rose, he would seek to re-configure his environment using his stereo:

I wrapped the speakers around my head and just wrote and drew pictures to my wife. I drew pictures for the kids and I wrote to my wife. I would have the music on...Because I used to say to him, 'I'm gonna put your telly down on the chair, you lay on your bed you watch your telly, you can hear that, and I'll move the speakers right round', so it was like...erm, a massive headphone. **(Steve, 40's, Long-Length, Early-Stage)**

This example illustrates in a very literal way how music can provide greater flexibility for prisoners in seeking to re-configure the highly constricting conditions of cohabitation. Crucially, music's material properties offered a means of 'selective positioning' (Kreuger, 2018), allowing Steve to block out the immediate sources of disturbance by creating a distinct sonic 'box' within which he felt separate from the television and the rest of the cell. Practices such as this illustrate how music was used as a removal activity, by manipulating the auditory environment in ways which allowed prisoners to block out unwanted and potentially distressing sounds. Other prisoners referred to the practice of temporary detachment from their environment in terms of 'escape'. Ollie, for instance, stated that one could be 'anywhere' with music and Marcus [20's, Short-Length, Early-Stage] indicated the similarities he perceived with drug use, describing how music was a commonly used as a tool for meditation ("when they listen to music, that's like meditating, innit? It's like you're not really aware of where you are..."). Marcus described 'using sounds' to help him meditate and described how music was commonly used as a point of focus by residents to guide 'mindfulness'. Ron [50's, Unsented] described turning his radio up to 'drown out' the noises outside his cell, once more providing an immediate point of focus through which to insulate himself from the noise outside. Practices such as these can be understood in terms of 'removal activities' (Goffman, 1961; DeNora, 2013) in the sense that they provide temporary release from the immediate stress and discomforts of confinement.

Music technologies were perceived by many to have certain material benefits over other sources removal and numerous respondents suggested they would rather have a radio instead of a television (the relative benefits and drawbacks of radios and CD players, and their use in terms of removal and 'refurnishing' are discussed at length below). However, as DeNora (2000) suggests, music is a 'relational' concept and thus requires us to look in more detail at the use and understanding of music in relation to its social, cultural, and material environment. As this section

has shown, the popularity and effectiveness of removal activities are determined by the economic and material circumstances in which they are used. The following section places these removal practices in the broader context of the prison economy in order to situate their use in a more detailed way.

4.2.2 The formal and informal prison economies

The *Incentives and Earned Privileges* (MOJ, 2011; HMPPS, 2019a) scheme was the principal mechanism which determined access to goods and commodities, categorising prisoners as either *Basic*, *Standard*, or *Enhanced* Sentencing. Before 2019, prisoners had entered the prison on Basic conditions wherein access to television and other basic services were limited to a large extent. However, with recent changes to this policy seeking to improve the consistency and fairness of the IEP system (HMPPS, 2019), prisoners would enter the prison on Standard condition, setting a downgrade to Basic conditions aside for officers to deploy as punishment. Standard Sentencing ensured that prisoners had access to a limited number of visits, letters, telephone calls, private money and other core provisions such as food and clothing. All prisoners entering the system were put on Standard for the initial months following arrival in order to encourage them to achieve Enhanced Sentencing by engaging and complying with the regime through work, education, and Offending Behaviour Programmes. Engaging in work or education provided a small income to prisoners who were able to spend this money, alongside that sent in by family and friends, on a selection of items provided by the prison through the canteen system. However, due to the slow and oversubscribed nature of both work and education at HMP South Hill many prisoners were on a limited weekly income.

CDs, stereos, and radios were available via the canteen system with the most powerful stereo systems being barred from those except prisoners who had achieved Enhanced Sentencing. These items were sold at high-street prices but were infrequently purchased as prisoners were required to buy phone credit, toiletries, and supplementary food each week from their own accounts. Charles [60's, Short-Length, Early-Stage], who received no additional income, described basic necessities as 'expensive' given that he received a pound a day throughout the week for his role in the education department. Both Nathan [30's, Long-Length, Late-Stage] and Devonte [30's, Remand] used the term 'rip off' to describe the canteen, and Nathan expressed scepticism about the cost of CD's describing the 'exclusive[...]contract' which the supplier had bought from the

Ministry of Justice. As Steve explained, access to music technology was always at the expense of these essential goods:

[F]or some of us guys in here, we're not on a lot of money, a week's money is a CD for us, so when you think about what we have to...no disrespect- the food's not great, so we buy food off the canteen (laughs), so if you want a CD you're going without food to get your CD. **(Steve 40's, Long-Length, Early-Stage)**

In this context, the cost of a radio or stereo was perceived to be prohibitive by many, as the savings required would risk undermining basic nutrition as well as other material necessities. For Elias [20's, Recall], it was not only cost of music technology but also the risk and uncertainty that ordering through the prison canteen involved. After saving up for a radio over several months, the order would take an additional two months to arrive, during which time prisoners who resided at HMP South Hill on a short-term or temporary basis may have left. As Elias stated: "by the time the two months come you could be shipped out of jail, and you won't get it...you'll lose it." While the majority of prisoners would buy toiletries, snacks, and other day-to-day consumables via the canteen, more expensive items such as radios, CDs and stereos required careful consideration due to the profoundly contingent nature of daily life for the majority at South Hill. For this reason, the formal economy of the prison would often lose out to the informal economy as a means by which prisoners gained access to music technology.

Despite the fact that radios and stereos bought informally from other prisoners could cost as much as ten times more than their price on the high street, these exchanges were still common. Edward described how he had arranged for his mother to transfer money into another resident's bank account in order to 'blag' his radio before he left. Likewise, Devonte had made it a priority to acquire a radio as soon as he entered the prison and explained "I bought it from another prisoner, yeah. You know what, I got overcharged but everything's overpriced in Jail". As Devonte's quote suggested, these items were expensive, and residents could demand up to £500 for the most powerful hi-fi's. However, despite these highly inflated prices, the value that these items had over those ordered from the canteen list was that they were delivered immediately and required no painful period of saving their meagre prison income or the fear of loss or damage in the process of delivery. Items bought in this way could also be sold for equivalent value throughout one's sentence, as well as swapped, and even gifted to another prisoner on release; as such, a steady supply of licit music equipment entered the grey economy at South Hill through the flow of objects across the social, geographic, and economic structures of the prison.

Radios and stereos would often stay within the system for many years. Patched up, adapted, and passed from prisoner to prisoner, they represented distinctly durable parts of the prison economy when compared against the largely consumption-focussed nature of the formal economy (Jewkes, 2002). The consumable nature of most commodities on the canteen list is a telling indication of the character of objects within the institutional framework as a system of coercion. The commodities on offer represented small supplements to the basic regime; brief pleasures meant to provide an incentive for good behaviour and engagement with the regime without providing sustained satisfaction or risking the accumulation of too much material wealth in one place. Charles described with bemusement how four of his twelve milk cartons were confiscated by prison officers due to the concern, set out in the rules, that more than eight cartons could be used as a weapon [Conversation in Fieldnotes, 10/01/2018].

Items such as radios and stereos were relatively durable in the sense that they did not degrade after use in the same way as consumables such as drugs or food, and therefore occupied a place of particular value within the economy, whilst still being accessible to the majority of prisoners. However, 'durability', as Law (2007) suggests, must be considered as a relational concept and it was clear that music technologies were more vulnerable to damage, theft, or redundancy within the prison than many other settings due to the unpredictable nature of prison life. While radios and stereos are designed to be durable up to a defined point by encasing their sensitive components in plastic, it was common for the high usage of these devices as well as the tight proximity of shared cells to lead to theft and breakages. Devonte indicated that items had 'gone missing' from his cell, while Liam [30's, Short-Length, Mid-Stage] had returned from work to find that his cellmate had broken his radio ("ah mate I was so annoyed. I pulled it out and I was like 'what's going on with the radio?' He was like 'ah I dropped it earlier'"). David [30's, Unsentenced] described attempting to repair a broken stereo with the wires of discarded earphones while Devonte described how he had bought his radio with a 'home-made aerial' that allowed him to pick up the local pirate radio stations. The functionality of radios depended on one's position within the prison and for younger prisoners such as Tom [20's, Early-Stage, Mid-Length] who wished to listen to local specialist radio stations, the task of finding reception within the prison lead him to request to move cells in order to find a 'good signal'.

For these objects to function and endure in this environment, a degree of work and adaptation was often required in order to ensure that access remained consistent. George [30's, Long-Length, Late-Stage], for instance, contrasted his approach towards his possessions to other prisoners, describing his refusal to let them enter into the informal economy in desperation for, for

instance, illicit substances: "somebody might smoke weed or smoke spice, or take some form of drug, or need burn or need something for somebody and might give their items up to gain something. I'd never do that." For George, this fixed stance towards his property as a long-term investment reflected a response to the profound sense of contingency expressed by many prisoners. As a long-term prisoner, however, George's adaptive stance was based around maintaining independence from the contingencies of both the informal economy and the institution for accessing goods and services:

For me to leave this prison and go to another prison, I don't have to ask a member of staff or another prisoner for anything. I have everything I need. I make sure I have everything I need. So that if one day- this isn't my home- if one day they come to my door and they say, "pack your stuff, you're leaving", the next place I get to, I'm ok. That's how I make sure I'm ok. **(George)**

As a long-term prisoner reaching the end of his sentence, George had acquired a number of durable resources and had furthermore learned to maintain access to these tools at all costs. His attitude reflects an ongoing practice of ownership aimed at achieving a stable network of object relations. George's approach is redolent of Toch's (1977) concept of a 'niche' as a stabilised microcosm used for managing periods of 'disequilibrium' this concept will be discussed more in chapter 7.

Beyond the physical and social relations that constituted these objects, durability was also determined by the status of the objects in relation to the institutional systems of surveillance, particularly as it tallied with the recognised possessions of a prisoner as recorded on their 'prop' (property) card. This system was used by the staff to assist in the prevention of theft and bullying, and to ensure that a prisoner was not engaging with the informal economy to attain goods beyond their IEP status. As George and Elias suggest, objects registered in this way took on a different and more durable status or quality in relation to the regime:

Obviously music's something [intrinsic to] prison because, before TV's, people only have music and when you get in trouble you go on basic and they take your TV- they can't take your music, they can only take prison property. You've paid for a music system so it can't be taken off of you. **(George)**

If I don't go home now and I do stay here for the rest of my recall...whatever jail I go to, I will get a sound-system and... d'you know what I mean? Because it's nice

to have it, it follows you through your whole sentence, (once) you have it on your prop card. (Elias)

In contrast to such objects bought through the formal economy, Steve's account illustrates how the unmarked status of objects from the informal economy made the relations of property or ownership contingent. Steve explained how he had been downgraded from Standard to Basic regime following a cell search in which officers found a mobile phone belonging to his cellmate hidden (unbeknown to Steve) in the back of Steve's hi-fi system. Steve had been gifted the hi-fi from a previous prisoner and since it had not been successfully placed on his property card, it had consequently been confiscated ('So now it's sitting in reception or with security, but they don't know whose property card it's on. So if it's not on my prop card, I can't get that back'). This meant that where George's objects had been attributed the quality of institutional recognition, Steve's were unrecognised and, as such, were rendered more vulnerable to loss.

As Jordan [30's Prison Officer] explained, prisoners' property was primarily regulated through cell searches, though these would often be undertaken without the 'prop' card according to the discretion of the officers. This decision reflected an understanding by officers that the 'swapping' of CDs, games, and books was a constant occurrence amongst prisoners and would cost more in terms of time and distress than it was likely to achieve in control and authority. Jordan suggested that the risk of unfairly confiscating an item belonging to someone else was a concern and neglecting the official procedure of removal of an illicitly obtained item was justified as a means of maintaining both order and legitimacy.

While musical equipment such as CD cases and players would be checked during cell searches, they were not treated as suspicious objects in themselves, but rather as hiding places for drugs, mobiles, weapons, or other illicit items ('as long as there's nothing getting passed in between those things I'm happy with it, but you'll always have a check', (Jordan)). Thus, to leave behind the prop card was to suggest that the officers were looking for something specific rather than simply seeking to make life difficult for the prisoner. While the officers were required to enforce the rules and seize property found within the cell that did not appear on the prisoner's prop card, if one did not attract suspicion then the likelihood of having items confiscated was largely reduced.

An important point to be made here is that access to music cannot be considered here principally in terms of ownership of stereos and radios. This approach undermines the complexity and variability of practice that constituted access, and indeed, *ownership* within the prison. Taking this object-oriented perspective, it is interesting to consider how objects within the prison often

took on different qualities depending on their institutional status. For an object to hold the quality of reliability, in the face of cell searches, prop cards, as well as the contingency and risk associated with communal cohabitation (i.e. theft or breakage), it required both consistent work and the pursuit of institutional arrangements. For an object such as a radio to pass from the illicit to the licit (i.e. to have it added to a prop card or transferred from one prisoner's prop card to another) required effort from both prisoners and officers to achieve a bureaucratic outcome that would likely be considered low priority for staff in most instances. It is perhaps for this reason also that officers would choose to avoid penalising these objects 'out of place', to borrow Mary Douglas' term (1966:41), since the mechanisms used to regulate and recognise them were often unresponsive due to the large workload that officers described having. The informal economy was therefore an adaptation by both prisoners and officers, that allowed some semi-regulated movement of these objects between prisoners that facilitated forms of access more suited to the realities for those living within the temporal dynamics and daily-to-day contingency the local prison. In this way, maintaining a flow of goods used for coping with confinement throughout the prison economy provided a value for both residents and staff.

4.2.3 Coping and the use of musical resources

For many prisoners, simply accessing music constituted a profound challenge and even once one had acquired a radio or stereo, challenges still abounded. These are important points to emphasise within this study, as music sociology tends to take for granted the almost ubiquitous access which late-capitalist societies provide in the free world to listen to music in a frictionless way. While smart phones have become increasingly available across the prison estate in recent years through smuggling and illicit trade, access to the internet and any associated technology is strictly prohibited and the vast majority of prisoners endure limited access to music through any means (cf. Jekwes & Johnston, 2009). In prisons, therefore, both the conditions in which music is consumed as well as the materiality of the music technologies are different from those on which much contemporary music scholarship is based.

The most widely available source of music at HMP South Hill was through the National Prison Radio station, which was accessible via prisoner's televisions. Interviewees valued this service not only for its music but for its documentary-style programmes and its focus on prison issues. While clearly an important feature for some, during the time of the research NPR was unavailable

to prisoners due to a technical issue which was only restored in the final months of the fieldwork. For those without access to a radio or stereo, the absence of the NPR was clearly a frustration and respondents would frequently complain about it ("all we get is a blue screen saying "this is National Prison Radio", but there's no sound" Charles [60's, Short-Length, Early-Stage]). For others, NPR was not a satisfactory means for accessing music and Shaun felt as if it catered to too many tastes:

We've got [National Prison] radio but...you know they'll play one song, and then one genre and then another genre and then a...it's like Fridays and Saturdays you'll get certain DJ's that'll play certain music, but, for me, if I want to listen to house music then I want to listen to house music. Like, I don't wanna hear house, and then U2, and then The Petshop Boys, and then 50-Cent. I wanna hear that same genre of music all the way through. **(Shaun, 40's, Short-Term, Mid-Length)**

Shaun sought consistency from his music in order to construct and maintain 'interest'⁷, and this can be read in terms of a desire to construct and maintain a desired emotional state. Where the qualities of the music were perceived to shift too drastically from song-to-song, the ability to configure the self in relation to a particular affective state were limited. Harvey explained some of these dynamics in more detail, illustrating the vulnerability that prisoners felt to adverse shifts in mood:

You get the National Prison Radio, but that's anything. And sometimes they just do story time and that (which is) ra [not preferable], but when a good song comes on, and it gets you out, you're looking around and when the music stops, you think, 'urgh, shit, here I am again' (laughs). **(Harvey, 20's, Mid-Length, Early-Stage)**

While radios were the most common form of music technology within the prison, it was clear that many perceived limitations in the radio-show format, with interviewees often complaining about the inconsistency of the content or, similar to the television, the jolting rhythm of the ad-breaks between songs. As Steve suggested, the radio fundamentally provided little choice for listeners, and interpersonal dynamics of cell-sharing could render the radio even harder to utilise. He explained, "if you get a decent song coming on the radio you can't play it again! So if your cellmate's talking, I'll miss that song! I might not hear that song for another 2-3 months, it's horrible!" While some local and specialist radio shows were known to play specific genres of music

⁷ While NPR did provide genre specific shows at some points of the day, these would sometimes clash with work or education leaving the more variety-oriented shows for periods of the day with higher listenership.

in a way which some prisoners found consistently desirable, for many prisoners who sought out music as a means of establishing sustained periods of environmental consistency, the radio could be limiting and even counteractive. The inability to control what one listened to manifested as a profound feeling of frustration for prisoners such as Steve who described his feelings of inhibition:

Yeah, [I] block out a lot of stuff [that comes on the radio]. But don't forget as well, when you're listening to the radio you don't have a choice of what song you put on, so I can't put a song on to cheer me up...so there's not, there's not a chance of that. I can't just go back to my cell and put my wedding song on [...] and have a little cry, it don't work like that. You have to wait for songs to come on the radio. Don't forget you have to wade through a lot of shit to listen to a decent song on the radio. **(Steve, 40's, Long-Length, Early-Stage)**

Due to the inconsistency of the radio, having reliable access to certain songs was perceived as a valuable resource by some, and prisoners on longer term sentences would sometimes seek to accrue large collections of CD's through the prison canteen. Nathan [30's, Long-Length, Late-Stage], for instance, described having collected between three and four hundred CD's over the course of his sentence, explaining "I been in for a long time innit". Stereos tended to function as both radios and CD players, however access to CDs was challenging as these were expensive and difficult to acquire. Furthermore, as Zach [20's, Mid-Length, Late-Stage] explained, CDs tended to have a more finite quality amongst the array of in-cell activities and he explained how he would quickly get 'bored' of certain CDs, explaining "I binge and that, I binge on it and just get rid of it. I'll binge on it and just sell it." This attitude was less pronounced in older prisoners who tended to engage less in the informal economy and were hence more cautious about their purchases. Steve, for instance, suggested that he was only inclined to listen a few 'classic albums' the whole way through, suggesting that it would be more economically viable for him to purchase specific tracks individually. Jack [50's, Long-Length, Early-Stage], conversely, stated that he "needed to go back to the albums" having become disappointed with the selection of songs on the compilation CDs which he bought.

Music must be understood as part of an institutional mechanism and economic decisions such as those made by Steve and Jack are articulations of the enforced limitation of goods and services that ensures systems such as the Incentives and Earned Privileges system are able to extract compliance. While, as the previous section suggested, music technologies bought through the formal economy would resist this arrangement to some extent, affording both the financial and

temporal cost of purchasing a radio via the canteen was accessible only to those on longer sentences. As such, many of those most in need of music for managing the complex and debilitating initial shock of imprisonment were unable to attain music technologies through licit means. As both residents and officers suggested, the high rate of drug use and self-harm were linked to both the long hours of confinement and, crucially, the inability of prisoners to access licit material resources by which to emotionally regulate during these periods. Despite the difficulties in attaining music technologies, music was characterised as a necessity by many and access would be negotiated through some means. The following section explains why music took on vital significance for some prisoners by describing its value within practices of 'refurnishing' (DeNora, 2013:79).

4.2.4 Coping through refurnishing

Despite the limitations faced by many prisoners, interviewees referred to moments of profound affective intensity generated by music within the confines of the cell which, like Steve's, [40's, Long-Length, Early-Stage] reference to his wedding song, provided access to deeply held memories that could provide comfort and respite. While Harvey [20's, Mid-Length, Early-Stage] and Steve's accounts above outlined the danger that moments such as these could lead to anti-climactic feelings, the sentiment that "a good song could get you through a day" [Steve] was shared by several respondents. Nathan [30's, Long-Length, Late-Stage] stated that in prison, 'people need music' explaining how listening to a song could 'take them to a happy place' during instances of emotional stress. In similar terms, Edward stated:

[O]n the days when you're behind the door in a prison cell, and you're really down, if you've got the radio on and a good song comes on it just really lifts your spirit and just reminds you that it aint going to be like this forever and you're gonna be out soon and you can get back to life and normality and everything can be happy again. **(Edward, 20's, Mid-Length, Late-Stage)**

In the context of her work on music and wellbeing, DeNora (2013:48) describes moments such as this as "when one encounters something in the external (or internal, mental) world that serves to refresh, recharge, alleviate." Instances such as these illustrate the capacity for music to enhance moods in profound ways and DeNora suggests that these states can be sustained or

augmented in various ways. This ability to interface with music and construct both self and environment around its affective affordances was an important feature of much of the musical practice at HMP South Hill. For Steve and his cellmate Oli [20's, Long-Length, Late-Stage], for instance, music was an important feature in their relationship and their interest in a broad range of genres enabled a fluency and dynamism in their interaction with each other. More than benefitting from a shared interest in a particular era, or genre, Steve referred to the benefits more in terms of sharing a profound appreciation for music to his relationship:

So I mean I've got a good cellmate, and he's really into music as well. And I like [that] he's into a lot of genres of music, which is good for [me] because it (means that we) don't just have one thing on. **(Steve)**

Tobias's cellmate's broad knowledge of music was also a benefit during these periods of confinement and their shared enthusiasm for 'music' as a topic of conversation is notable:

I've got a good cellmate though in terms of music, because he's got a good um, he's got a good library in his head (laughs) of music. Like he's just not just a rap fan, like he's diverse as well, like, he likes all types of music. But, like, we ask each other questions like, um,-whatever might prompt it, the radio or what's on TV or whatever- but we'll ask each other questions like "cool, your top 10...cool your top 5...cool your top 5 dead artists, top 5 dead or alive, top 5 American artists, top 5 UK artists, top 5 rap, top 5 for outside of rap" **(Tobias, 20's, Long-Length, Early-Stage)**

In numerous examples, music's agency within this situation was only partly expressed through its 'material' presence in the room, holding greater significance as a continuity of the social relationships established between the cellmates. It was not uncommon for respondents to report 'dancing' [Devonte, 30's, Remand] or singing [Ollie, 20's, Long-Length, Late-Stage] along to the music they heard on the radio, and it was clear that affective aspects of music during this period were an important dimension, allowing prisoners to extend and 'augment' moments of affective intensity brought on by hearing a familiar or nostalgic song on the radio. Referring again to Wahidin's research, we see the description of the use of various types of media as a means of mediating the 'the time of the real' and creating spaces that allowed prisoners to "suspend the outside world but, simultaneously, in an unprecedented fashion 'float' and 'flow' between the prison and the outside world" (Wahidin, 2006:para 6)

According to DeNora (2013), removal activities involve the attempt to negate or evade features of one's environment in order to situate oneself in a space more conducive to well-being. Conversely, 'refurnishing' refers to the desire to create 'asylum' through 'attempts to transform or build upon some element of [one's] environment' (p50). Important to this theory is the notion that the practice of refurnishing allows individuals to negotiate their environment through 'collaborative play'. Here DeNora elaborates the practices facilitated through refurnishing:

Refurnishing allows actors the latitude to be and act in certain ways, to feel at ease while so doing and to pursue various projects and trajectories that involve navigating (which is also the making of) social space/time. (DeNora, 2013:55)

The accounts outlined in section 4.3.1 evidenced many of the characteristics of removal activities wherein music was used to block-out or retreat from undesirable circumstances. Here the flexibility of music within the otherwise fixed space of the cell allowed prisoners to, as Ron [50's, Unsented] put it, "drown-out" invasive noises, or partition-off sections of their cells. DeNora suggests that while these strategies can be highly effective in re-establishing the self and 'recapturing personal rhythms', removals are temporary interventions which fail to fundamentally alter one's environment as one re-enters. In this sense, durability is a defining feature of refurnishing and the practices outlined in the previous sections provide a useful contextual frame for making sense of durability within the context of the prison. Nostalgic episodes in which music was used as a catalyst to retreat into individual fantasy or memory can be seen in terms of removal, therefore, as these practices were bounded by the internal world of the prisoner. However, where these integrate themselves within the relationships of cellmates by bridging and enriching certain aspects, these practices take on durable aspect in relation to the environment. As Elias explained:

You know when they do the throwback on Kisstory or something, or even Charlie Sloth plays like some old-school song I'll be like "raa! I remember when I was like 15! Like, when this song came out', I thought! You know what I mean, you remember things like? It's just nice like, you know, sometimes to have a little remembrance (sic), in jail that's good to have. **(Elias, 20's, Recall)**

In this way, music provided a prop for prisoners to enact parts of their self narrative to each other, rendering themselves open and knowable without exposing vulnerability. Nostalgia was a common basis for interaction between cellmates, and this mode of relation to music held significance as a strategy for bridging both temporal and spatial pains. By drawing on emotional memories, cellmates were thus able to articulate aspects of themselves, their values, experiences,

and sensibilities to each other. It was for this reason that media played such an important role in developing close friendships as it brought sources of familiarity between cellmates together. Edward and his cellmate had connected on a number of different things and he explained reason for their continued cohabitation as follows:

We both love music, we both love a bit of football, we both love fashion, we love talking about women, cars, money, jobs, families, life, you know? We get on so well, and we love music. **(Edward, 20's, Mid-Length, Late-Stage)**

Despite this convivial arrangement, Edward found the 'hollow' and 'echoey' sounds of the spur distracting and described how the loud noises which would enter the cell sometimes made it "difficult for [him] to [...] function". He described in detail how ordering his cell allowed him to "forget the outside" and attune himself to a recontextualised environment:

Erm, I could hear the noise outside the door and it's difficult because it's a hollow wing. It's echoey in here as you can see now as we're talking. This gaff just echoes and echoes and echoes. So erm, anyway, yeah I just thought well, excuse my language, sorry for swearing, I just thought 'fuck 'em'. Turn the radio up, wipe the sides over- I'm a bit OCD, see? I have to have my toiletries a certain way, my shower gels, my creams, my toothpastes, my tweezers my toenail clippers, my hairbrush, it all has to be positioned right, you know?
(Edward)

Here music provides both a means of blocking-out noises outside the cell as well as a means of configuring the immediate environment in a way that allowed Edward to attain a shift in his emotional state. Turning the radio up and giving the cell a 'little tidy up' can be read as ways of 'regularizing' (DeNora, 2000:60) his environment by determining the visual and auditory stimuli within it. Thus, Edward's strategy involved both insulating himself within an environment and ordering that environment in a way that allowed him to express a sense of agency over an otherwise disempowering situation. Crucially, music provided a point of focus that allowed him to deploy his attention away from the noises outside ("forget the noise, turn the radio up. Just listen to the music") and orient himself towards the task of "tidy[ing] up". By attuning himself to the music Edward was able to configure his mood and energy level in relation to the task, allowing him to create a shift in his overall affective state. Edward's account begins to illustrate some of the qualities associated with 'refurnishing' which DeNora uses to distinguish from 'removal'. While both strategies are effective in allowing actors to attain forms of wellbeing, respite, and pleasure, Edward's manipulation of his material environment through the arrangement of his possessions

indicates a more sustained and repeatable practice of spatial configuration than, for instance, going to sleep might. Where refurbishing involves establishing durable shifts in one's environment, removal involves some risk of 'guilt' or 'discomfort' as one re-enters a world that is the same as one left it. DeNora (2013) refers in this way to the overlapping and continuity between removal and refurbishing practices, and this is seen clearly in Edward's further description of a common arrangement within his cell:

Television hasn't been on. We've just had music on from 8 o'clock this morning till now. And I'm enjoying it, I just lay back. I might have a roll up, or at the minute I'm vaping, I've got an E-cigarette, so I'd be sitting there, I had a clean-up, a little wipe over, tidy up, a little sweep, made my bed, and just chilled out, listening to music, having a chat, music, wrote a letter to my mum... Just making the hours pass. **(Edward)**

In this account, Edward describes the ongoing construction of 'asylum' through the threading together of activities, relations, and affective stimuli in which music plays a consistent feature. This assemblage constitutes a dense interweaving of removal and refurbishing activities which ultimately provide a feeling of both dynamism and control within the cell. Activities such as tidying, and letter writing are counterposed with less focussed activities such as conversation and smoking creating periods of contrast and consistency throughout the time spent confined. DeNora (2000) emphasises the flexible properties of music technology in her account of its use in retail spaces. Here she describes how the ability to alter volume, position, as well as the affective properties of the music provides 'temporal contrast' to the fixed features of one's environment. Here, being able to recontextualise an environment by shifting the auditory stimuli present within it provides an important tool for self-constitution as actors engage in continual and reflexive configuration of self and environment.

Edward illustrated the flexibility of music in the context of the cell, explaining "some songs will come on I'll turn down and I'm like 'nah, I'm not into that' and I'll just listen to it quietly, and then when a good one comes on what I like, 'shhhhp' [mimes action of turning the radio volume] I turn it up." The constancy of the music within the cell must thus be understood as a dynamic presence, fading in and out of focus depending on the desire for either contrast or consistency, activity or repose. Elias provides another perspective on the expressive qualities of music within the environment describing 'the best thing' for managing 22-hour stretches of cellular confinement as a configuration based around fluid creativity:

You're just chilling and just freestyling, listening to music and just chilling. It's the main thing you can do because don't wanna go mad. You'll go mad, that's why we just freestyle...(for) hours sometimes, writing songs, listening to music, sometimes I'll just turn off the tv and just listen to the radio for hours and just fall asleep, d'you know what I mean? **(Elias)**

Like Edward, Elias' account illustrates a dynamic environment in which music serves as a backdrop to a range of activities. Here, however, the ability to engage in creative craft provides a clear indication of refurbishing activity by which the environment is configured around features such as play, creativity, validation, and flow. Music's dynamic qualities operate here as well, providing inspiration, and sometimes a backing-track, for these creative practices. As Elias described the value of writing music in terms of a 'modern diary', allowing individuals who would be otherwise disinclined from vocalising their feelings to express them. The collaborative nature of these practices is also significant for DeNora (2013) and practices such as singing, playing along with televised quiz shows and board games all appear to fall under the concept of 'collaborative play'. The significance of 'play' will be returned to in chapter 6 as we explore the role of collective practices in more detail.

Music thus provided an important resource for binding together various features of the in-cell environment in ways which allowed prisoners to engage in both removal and refurbishing activities. Music's role was rarely a principal point of focus within these assemblages however, and instead its flexible material characteristics allowed it to provide consistency and contrast within the cell, allowing prisoners to engage in reflexive regulation of both self and environment.

4.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter has sought to explore a particular, but central, dimension of the experience of imprisonment, that of cellular confinement. In drawing on accounts of this specific time-space we have seen how interweaving or, in Ingold's (2010) terms, 'entanglement' between people and 'things' provides an important framework for understanding both the pains of cellular confinement as well as the strategies mobilised by prisoners to mitigate them. As we have seen above, the use of music as a means of removal required prisoners to foreground music as a distraction from the disturbing or undesirable features of their environment. However, as the accounts over the past sections have shown, the material properties of media technologies within the context of the prison present various inhibitions to achieving what DeNora (2013) describes as 'asylum'. Asylum refers

to concepts of 'room, ontological security, control and creativity, pleasure, validation of the self, sense of fit, flow, comfort, ease, focus, [and] temporal fit' (2013:56) which constitute conditions conducive to wellbeing. As this and the previous sections have sought to show, the material culture (Miller, 1998) of the prison, which includes its economic, institutional, and spatial dimensions, determine the possibilities available to prisoners for coping with the pains of confinement. Like drugs, sleep, television, and numerous other forms of distraction, music enables certain 'action possibilities' (Kreuger, 2015), and inhibits others. Within the context of the prison it is vital to remain alert to these inhibitions and challenges of access as these come to determine to a large extent what it is possible for prisoners to achieve in terms of their well-being.

Chapter 5

Musically Re-configuring the Imprisoned Self

Introduction

As a local prison which houses large numbers of short term, unsentenced, and temporary prisoners, Rosemary Ricciardelli's research (2015) provides a useful framework for making sense of the entrenched feeling of indeterminacy which characterised daily life at HMP South Hill. She suggests that the stability of a prison's social environment determines the ways in which subjects act in relation to each other, and, that forms of 'strategic masculinity' emerge in response to the perception of risk. The perception of risk is most pronounced when the social constitution of a residential space is felt as transient and prisoners are unable to form trusting relationships with those around them. Here, prisoners are required to adapt themselves into defensive postures in order to safely negotiate the shifting social terrain.

The emotional life of the prison has become a point of increasing focus in recent research. Ricciardelli's work shares a common interest with several other studies (Crewe et al. 2014; Law and Crewe, 2016) in looking at the affective dynamics of the prison and the ways in which prisoners undertake the 'emotional work' (Hochschild, 1983) required of them.

This chapter takes this dimension of the social life of the prison as its starting point, exploring the ways in which residents and staff have used music to construct themselves and their identities in relation to range of complex social and institutional factors. DeNora (2000:46) refers to music as the 'cultural material *par excellence* of emotion' and provides examples of how music is used to order the self in relation to the emotional and behavioural demands of one's environment. This chapter begins by laying out some of these specific environmental demands and the forms of 'emotional regulation' (Gross, 2014) required of them before looking in more detail at the role of music in the construction of self and identity.

5.1 Indeterminacy and Affective Stances

Prisoners are required to engage in constant 'emotional work' (Hochschild in DeNora, 2000:53) in order to negotiate the complex demands imposed upon them by both the institution and by prisoner society. With men's establishments in particular, scholars have identified a need to deploy a public 'front' (see Laws and Crewe 2016) as a means of emphasising an individual's masculine traits; equally, dissimulating emotional responses considered as 'weak' or evidencing vulnerability is well-documented (See also Schmid and Jones, 1991; Crewe, 2009).

Steve [40's, Long-Length, Early-Stage], for instance, found it hard to 'relax' in prison, describing the continual strain of maintaining an assertive and vigilant stance towards daily life. He described his constant need to make "little move[s]" in order to ensure that he was not missing out on basic goods ("You might not get your right dinner at your fucking dinner time, you might not get your milk at lunch, you might not...you've got to be on the ball constantly"). Steve was forced to apprehend minor interactions and discrepancies as "moves" and his stress derived from having to continually interpret and respond to events by articulating a willingness to engage in confrontation if necessary. Laws and Crewe describe this as an 'appraisal' response (2016:541), that is, prisoners are forced to apprehend situations as direct and intentional challenges to their status, which, in other circumstances, they may have ignored.

Harvey [20's, Mid-Length, Early-Stage] elaborated further, suggesting that failure to meet a challenge could result in being perceived as vulnerable by other residents – this leads to further challenges or repeated victimisation. Like Steve, he explained how small gestures and events which one might ordinarily overlook outside of the prison took on a heightened significance inside ("If someone's going to look at me then I'm going to look at them back and I'm going to make it even worse"). Being forced to adopt these 'strategic' (Ricciardelli, 2015) postures in response to even the most minor of affronts placed strain on residents for whom constant work was required in order maintain these 'fronts' (Law and Crewe, 2016.)

'Fronting' is seen as a way of generating a desired or necessary emotional response, of constructing the self as an assertive and masculine subject. By contrast, 'masking' refers to the *suppression* of emergent emotional experiences and is more illustrative of attempts to modify one's

emotional response on a bodily or behavioural level (Laws & Crewe, 2016). The men at South Hill consistently referred to taking such suppressive action as a more preferable response to emotional stress than 'fronting'/aggressive responses, as these could be detrimental to an individual's chances of a successful parole board (i.e. one which recommended a move to a lower security category prison, or even release). In one such instance, Ron [50's, Unsented] – who found living with a cellmate several decades younger than him a source of stress – described how concerns about his parole had forced him to endure the arrangement without requesting to move cell. Outbursts of anger or frustration, or of exaggerated claims of animosity might be effective in achieving short-term aims (such as moving cells), he explained; however, these had to be weighed against institutional mechanisms which could hinder release from prison:

Yeah it looks better for you [at your parole hearing] if you interact with people, you know, when you start telling [the prison] that you're...'if you put that guy in my cell I'm gonna stab him up' and all that madness (laughs)...that don't look good for you! **(Ron)**

Masking feelings of stress or anger were therefore an equally important feature of daily life for prisoners, as expressions of anger or stress could be used as evidence of risk or poor coping in parole hearings. Crewe (2011:520) refers to this as a 'tightening' of daily life within the 'late-modern' prison as systems of psychological evaluation play an increasingly significant role in determining features such as sentence length, risk category, and entitlement to levels of material privilege within the Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) system.

Prisoner respondents would frequently complain about the inconsistency of staff at HMP South Hill, suggesting that they lacked authority in dealing with difficult and disruptive prisoners. George [30's, Long-Length, Late-Stage] referred to the tendency for acts of non-compliance to be rewarded by staff, stating, "people get away with anything here". Likewise, Steve explained that amongst officers there was "no rush to be fair. It seems, the more you moan on there, the more you shout your mouth off, the more you get away with." This inconsistency contributed to a feeling of disempowerment for prisoners at HMP South Hill for whom power was manifested interstitially throughout their daily lives. Instances where the staff were perceived to be ineffective or inconsistent served to distance residents even further from the locus of power, further compounding the feeling of unpredictability.

As a local prison taking in prisoners from a large urban catchment area late into the night, HMP South Hill had a high turnover of prisoners moving in and out on a daily basis. Charles

explained the difficulty of making social relationships in this context. Here, he describes the 'brutal' nature by which prisoners could be moved to different institutions with little notice:

At 8 o'clock in the morning they might come and unlock you and say 'you've got 20 minutes'. Uh, most other people will still be locked up at that point. So you're not gonna get a chance to...you might get a chance to shout through the door but they could already be off at work or whatever. So, you know, you're not gonna make any long-lasting friendships (laughs) and they can end very abruptly.

(Charles, 60's, Short-Length, Early Stage)

Ricciardelli's (2015) work shows how situations of social transience (such as this) limit the possibilities of constructing trusting social relationships for residents, thereby aggravating the perception of risk. As the previous section showed, fears of theft were prevalent at HMP South Hill. However, while violence was frequently referred to, the risk here seemed more contained; residents describing it in relation to 'debt' [George] or pre-existing animosities or 'beef' [Tom, 20's, Mid-Length, Early Stage] from outside the prison. Nevertheless, residents were still extremely wary of each other and Edward's account illustrates the value of stable relationships. "I got a couple of friends on [my spur] what have been on there as long as me [who] I do still talk to because I can half trust them", he explained. "But then there's a lot of new faces come and go and you don't know who to trust". Liam [30's, Short-Length, Mid-Stage] similarly described a defensive stance towards other prisoners, referring to a learned sensitivity to risky social relationships: "in jail I know who to talk to and who not to talk to. I know who's gonna get me in trouble...".

Respondents tended to downplay the extent to which meaningful relationships could be formed within these conditions and Harvey described the majority of his relationships as "something to pass the time". Referring to two associates on the floor above he explained, "I only know the prison them, and they only know the prison me like. We don't know the real people like...because obviously you've got to act..." Charles expressed a similarly normalised view of identities as constructed: "whether it's a conscious agenda or not, you're never gonna get to know someone in prison. You're only going to get to know what they want to let you know." These accounts highlight the extent to which performance constituted a persistent feature of daily life at HMP South Hill.

In these accounts, emotional regulation strategies such as 'fronting' and 'masking' allowed residents to adapt stances in response to the demands of prison life. These stances can

be seen in Ricciardelli's (2015) terms as 'strategic masculinities', which are constructed in relation to the distinctly transient and unpredictable nature of social life within the prison (cf Schmid & Jones, 1991). However, as the earlier accounts in this section suggested, performances such as these caused strain amongst residents in order to maintain a stoic, assertive, and masculine identity. The following section therefore explores this 'emotional work' in more detail to explore the ways in which music contributed to these performances.

5.2 Music as a technology of the self

'Masking' and 'fronting' (Laws and Crewe, 2016) refer to emotional regulation strategies which describe the ways in which individuals seek to intervene at various points in the process of emotion production (Gross, 2014). As the previous chapter has shown, practices and resources which provide a basis for much of the day-to-day emotional regulation outside of the prison are not always available to prisoners who are forced to find other means of handling a range of undesirable affective states.

Emotional regulation was the most common use ascribed to music by respondents at HMP South Hill and DeNora's work explores this 'affordance' in detail. The previous chapter has shown how music enabled residents to maintain certain affective states by reflexively orienting themselves in relation to their immediate environment to create 'regularized' space. However, as we have seen, fronting requires individuals to move away from certain affective states and manifest other preferable states. In the following sections we will see how music allows both residents and staff to achieve these altered states by exploring the orientation of the self towards the wider prison environment.

5.2.1 Prisoners

Returning, then, to the concept of 'masking', David [30's, Unsented] described how music helped him to divert his emotional impulses from being expressed in action. Referring to the auditory dynamics of the White Stripes' 'Ball and Biscuit' – which he equated to the affective dynamics of the prison – he described how these qualities helped him manage feelings of 'rage'. "This kind of music...makes sense because I'd rather go crazy within my head by listening to such

a song than go crazy on someone while acting violently,” he explained. As DeNora (2000: 56) suggests, ‘music provides a simulacrum for a behavioural impulse’ allowing David to act out his feelings within a virtual space created by the music and his attuned environment.

Tobias [20’s, Long-Length, Early- Stage] described how music provided a way of managing both day-to-day stress as well as more entrenched affective states:

Music alters your mood so you want it. You want some music. You wanna just...If you've been wound up today, you need to press play on something that's gonna calm you down. If you've, um, been down for about 2 or 3 days, you wanna press play on something that's gonna cheer you up. **(Tobias)**

As Tobias suggest, music provided not only a means of ‘containing’ (Law and Crewe, 2016) emotions related to stress and sadness, it also provided the means to redirect emotional experiences into different directions. Harvey provides a detailed example of this shift in affective trajectory:

I'm feeling a bit moody or down in the dumps or whatever, I'll just find that something to bring me back up (inaudible) and I'll find that spark to keep me going. Then I'll flip it over to a little bit of Meek Mill or Lil Wayne or something like that, and then I'll channel whatever I was feeling bad about...I'd channel that, put it up there (gestures above him as if placing his emotion on a shelf) and then move forward with it. **(Harvey, 20’s, Mid-Length, Early-Stage)**

Harvey’s description of ‘channelling’ his negative feelings provides a clear example of the practices involved in reconstituting the self into a preferred state. It is clear from this account that music provided important tools for directly intervening in the process of emotion generation. The extract above illustrates how music was used by Harvey for both shifting his appraisal response as well as a means of attentional deployment and response modulation (Gross, 2014). In this context, shifting attention refers to the orientation of the self around a musical stimulus whose properties provide access to embodied feelings as well as shifts in the appraisal of the emotion eliciting situation and the experience of it. It is hard to disentangle these strategies from each other as response modulation and appraisal seem intrinsically connected in his description of finding music to “bring [him] back up”.

Identifying and hearing an appropriate song provided Harvey with a powerful cue to shift the psychological and experiential factors underlying his emotional response. This shift allowed

him to re-appraise his situation before shifting his attention by metaphorically placing his feeling on a shelf. As Crewe et al. (2014) suggest, emotional behaviours associated with sadness or depression were seen as signs of weakness within the prison, indicating that residents were not resilient enough to endure their sentences. Being able to mediate one's emotional state in this way provided a vital 'technology' for constructing the self in relation to one's environment, 'masking' negative states and establishing the affective co-ordinates and resources required to effectively perform one's 'front' (Laws and Crewe, 2016).

Steve described music as a type of emotional resource, capable of enacting durable shifts in one's affective state. Resonance, as Steve [40's, Long-Length, Early-Stage] suggests, can work both ways, and music has the capacity to trigger both pleasant and unpleasant memories:

It depends what mood you're in as well. Some days I wake up in the morning and I don't want to hear Garage first thing in the morning, you know? And sometimes I don't wanna hear fucking Magic FM, it'll depress me. You have to be in the mood for every...you'd don't even know what mood you're gonna be in for what music, do you? If a track comes on and you're in that mood that'll take over you. It does dunnit? You just, "ah fuckin' hell, I love that." And then you're in a good mood. That could get you through a day, especially in here. **(Steve)**

Gross (2014:388) suggests that 'awareness' of one's emotions as well as the 'context' in which they are formed can enhance both the 'range' and 'flexibility' of emotional regulation strategies. Both Harvey and Steve's accounts illustrate how music acts to raise awareness of the self and one's affective state. By identifying what he is 'in the mood' for and what he does not want to hear Steve furnishes himself with the means to articulate his current affective state, allowing him to both diagnose and treat it.

The capacity of music to operate in these circumstances derives from its embedding within the emotional lives of actors, and, as the accounts show, the ability to identify and access *specific* musical qualities plays an important role within these strategies. Here, as DeNora (2000) suggests, music provides access to the enduring relations of the self as a 'powerful *aide-mémoire*' (p.66) which can have the effect of returning listeners to preferred states by evoking a feeling of 'rightness' or of 'resonance' between the self and their situation (p. 67). In so doing, DeNora suggests actors constitute themselves as 'subjects of self-knowledge' by establishing patterns of action by which the self can be reliably altered in accordance with the wishes of the subject.

Returning to Harvey's account, we see that it is through articulating the qualities of certain types of music (in this case Meek Mill and Lil Wayne) that he was able to establish his affective co-ordinates towards which the music was expected to bring him. His relationship to this music expresses itself in this reflexive self-knowledge that enables him to engage in the ongoing process of self-constitution and care. Being able to determine which music is appropriate for a given situation relies on the ability to articulate which qualities of the music will make him feel in certain ways; this, in turn, allows him to regulate himself in accordance with his affective state. By this token, DeNora suggests, we constitute ourselves as 'aesthetic agents', rendering ourselves as subjects of self-knowledge and manipulation. These practices correspond to the more general concept of reflexivity which Archer defines as 'our ability to deliberate internally upon what to do in situations that are not of our making' (2003:342 in Crewe 2020:18). Determining which music corresponds to our embodied sense of who we are constitutes an ongoing, reflexive process of self-constitution and can be seen in some ways as a continuity of the processes described by Archer (2003 cited in Crewe et al. 2020). As the following section will show in more detail, the production of self-knowledge constituted an important feature in the emotion regulation strategies undertaken by prison officers at HMP South Hill.

5.2.2 Prison officers

Like prisoners, prison officers inhabited a dynamic and challenging environment and were required to undertake strategies of emotional regulation in order to retain consistency in their daily interactions. The respondents in this study were part of the new cohort of prison officers at HMP South Hill, half of whom had come through the 'unlocked-grads' scheme. This served as a fast-track route into senior staff positions for those who had undertaken an MSc course, as well as a range of other forms of practical and theoretical training. All of the respondents were in their first years on the job and were between 20 and 40 years old. The role of prison officer was a highly challenging job and levels of active staffing at HMP South Hill were constantly low due to illness. Assaults on staff had risen by 143% between 2013 and 2017 across the UK estate (Ministry of Justice, 2017) and increased a further 20% in 2018 (BBC News, 2018) during the fieldwork. The cause of illness', then, was often due either to workplace injuries, or, as admin staff suggested (Fieldnotes, 17/5/2018), due to stress.

For prison officers, the journey between home and work was an important time for emotional regulation; music played an important role in facilitating these practices. A significant

feature for all officers was the ability to form a separation between work and home life and the journey between the two provided space to, in Rob's [30's, Prison Officer] words, 'de-stress'. This practice illustrates a desire to avoid Crawley's (2002) notion of 'spill-over' in which the demanding features of the job can come to affect the personal lives and identities of officers. Jordan [30's, Prison Officer] described this practice further, explaining that 'heavy' music provided a release for him while he was in his car: "when I'm driving home I will tend to pick maybe a heavier track to let it out of my system so, by the time I get home, I'm calm and I'm ready to speak to my girlfriend".

Louise [20's, Prison Officer], similarly valued solitude in her drive home, describing how having the space to think would stop her 'ruminating' about stressful parts of her day. Referring to her choice of music, she explained, "I'd listen to something like chilled, or, erm...yeah, something like romantic or whatever, and I'm like "ah it's ok, life's going to be fine again" (laughs). Louise's account illustrates the extent to which the prison exerted itself over those who lived and worked there, echoing Ashforth & Kreiner's (1999) discussion of 'social taint'. Her need to shower after work in order to remove the 'prisonery' feeling from her indicates how rituals of separation such as these were targeted at both an embodied and symbolic level. These practices are similar to the practices of 'partitioning' described in the previous chapter and music acted as a means of configuring this space in order to render it suitable for the emotional practices required by prison officers to, in Rob's terms, "re-charge".

Despite the staff respondents' efforts to construct a neutral and consistent self, residents were alert to the moods of prison officers. While music helped some to undertake emotional regulation on entering and exiting the prison, it was clear from residents' accounts that officers could often constitute part of the contingency of daily life. Tom [20's, Mid-Length, Early-Stage] referred to being treated 'like shit' by some officers, while Edward [20's, Mid-Length, Late-Stage] speculated on the home life of the staff he encountered and described how these emotional dynamics exhibited by officers could come to permeate the prison and influence him:

It could be their mood, you don't know what's happening at home for them. You don't know what they're going through. You don't know what the job's doing for them. But some of them don't look happy. And I'm thinking 'mate, like why have you chosen this job if you ain't happy.' Like because I think they do take it out on us sometimes. I find that sometimes they're sweet and sometimes they're just rude and arrogant. It's like "mate yesterday you were sweet with my, now you wanna be an absolute dick. What's wrong with you, mate?" **(Edward)**

It was clear that staff played a determinant role in the daily lives of prisoners and Edward's quote illustrates how the mental state of officers could come to render the prison even more unpredictable for residents. Relations between officers and prisoners were highly dynamic and appeared to depend on a wide range of subjective, inter-subjective, and environmental factors. Vicky (20s, Prison Officer) acknowledged the inconsistency in her own practice:

If you have something going on with you, you'll come in and be more punitive. You'll have a shorter fuse, and you have to almost go, "I'm gonna be aware of that and actively try not to be punitive"...like not...because I know it's gonna effect the way I'll act. I know that's it's gonna maybe make me less humorous, normally I go on and say "hi, hi, hi ,hi, hi", if I'm feeling a bit like...something's happened outside and I'm like [despondent]. Maybe I won't say hi to people and they'll think that I don't want to talk to them. Because they'll go into their cell and think about it for ages and they'll be like "you didn't say hi to me." **(Vicky)**

Vicky's account further illustrates how the inconsistencies in prison officer's interactions can negatively impact residents. Her reference to residents fixating on small interactions in their cells illustrates how the power dynamic between officers and prisoners renders the latter more vulnerable. Similarly, Rob described how he sought to 'wipe the slate clean' as he entered the prison to avoid letting tensions and animosities effect his judgment and well-being as he interacted with prisoners. "It will effect you, won't it, d'you know what I mean?" he asked. "Walking around with a chip on your shoulder about something". Vicky suggested that the work of prison officers was based on a 'people system' and placed emphasis on good relations between staff and prisoners in ensuring the day-to-day functioning of the prison. She expressed dismay that other officers did not perceive the work in this relational manner and described how some officers were too rigid in their approach, unable to adapt to their response to fit the context:

Fairness of application, doesn't mean fairness of consequence. So everything we do is about discretion, if you're a good officer. So [for example] choosing to not give someone an negative entry for shouting at you because you know their mum just died.
(Vicky)

This tendency for some officers to unreflexively respond to situations punitively was also referred to by other staff and Jordan. He distinguished his own qualities of being "good with [his] mouth" from other officers who preferred "jumping on guys and wrapping them up". He suggested that these officers would prefer to work on the 'livelier' spurs where more opportunities

for physical restraint occurred. Rob indicated that music played a part in this, describing how some of his colleagues would use heavy music to 'get psyched up' before work in order to achieve the affective state required to engage in this physical activity.

For those interviewed, greater emphasis was placed on relationship building, rather than wielding authority – Jordan described how music provided a means of expressing himself in a way which he felt was 'humanising'. He described an instance, where, having found some residents listening to Bob Marley on a landing, he had joined in dancing and 'messaging about' with them. He explained, "it just shows them that I'm not a suit and tie, I'm actually a human being as well and I'm here to try and help them". Vicky described in similar terms how the arts provided a space to express herself in a way which transcended her institutional role, but maintained a safe difference from revealing personal information:

I can say "yeah, I like poetry"...I don't tell them that, you know, I write my own poetry, or I spend hours on YouTube watching spoken word performances...but like I'll leave little bits so it's not too personal but it gives me a way for them to feel like they can bring that to me. **(Vicky)**

Here, the use of music and aesthetic practices more generally provided ways of negotiating the vulnerability implicit in rendering the self visible. By expressing aesthetic preferences and sensibilities, music provided a bridge for individuals to develop relations of familiarity, trust, and even intimacy. In these instances, music provided a tool for bridging the complex power dynamics that influenced relations between residents and staff, allowing officers to engage with residents on a more immediate and affective level by rendering a component of their non-uniformed self present.

To some extent, both prisoners and staff were forced to engage in 'performance' (Goffman, 1956) and music provided a means, in both cases, of stabilising the outward display of the self through various strategies of emotional regulation. These strategies can be understood as the day-to-day practices that allow officers and residents to endure the dynamic and challenging nature of the prison environment, whilst fulfilling the requirements ascribed to their given roles. The following sections explore the reflexive construction of these roles in more detail. This is achieved by looking at the ways in which the more durable components of the self come to be mobilised and adapted to the experience of imprisonment.

5.3.1 Identity and Adaptation (I): Suspension

So far, this chapter principally been concerned with the emotional life of HMP South Hill and the ways in which music has constituted a means for residents and officers to manipulate their feelings in relation to the environment. We now consider the ways in which the environment came to influence the self in different ways by exploring how music contributed to the construction and enactment of identity. As Harvey's [20's, Mid-Length, Early-Stage] account in Section 5.2.1 showed, music's capacity to engender affective shifts relied on the manner in which music entwines itself within our emotional lives, providing access to memories, feelings, relations, and ways of being in the world deeply-rooted in our past. Amongst residents at South Hill, the most frequent references to memories invoked by musical associations were those of family life:

I remember my mum as a little boy. She put her tracksuit bottoms on and a vest and my mum's just scrubbing on the skirting boards and stuff and I remember Elvis Presley like, blaring! **(Callum, 20s, Mid-Length, Mid-Stage)**

You know them ones, like UB40 with me, where I used to hear it when I was young, my mum and dad used to play it, so it means something to me, whenever the song comes on, I can feel, like, move back to my youth type of thing. **(Harvey, 20s, Mid-Length, Early-Stage)**

My dad used to sing me a song when I was little, it used to make me cry all the time. And it can still do it now. **(Steve, 40s, Long-Length, Early-Stage)**

I know they're boring and we've heard them thousands of times. But you see when them songs come on, even my...me and my padmate was talking about it yeah? See them songs there; "ah my mum used to listen to that song." You know when you're in jail, them things are nice, trust me. **(Elias, 20s, Recall)**

As Steve's quote illustrates, these memories were frequently attached to vivid emotional recollections of particular spaces, times, activities, and relations. Music provided a means of accessing memories, such as these, by evoking the feelings they possessed during these instances of affective intensity. Carl's [30's, Long-Length, IPP] account is illustrative of the ways in which music comes to situate the self in space and time and described how his chosen song – Keane's "Everybody's Changing" – reminded him of a specific 'moment' he shared with his mother.

Carl described how music constituted an important feature of his relationship with his mother. While he was staying at her home during a detox he described a moment of profound resonance when she played him the song. Carl described how the lyrics 'all seemed relevant' to his situation at the time and he suggested that 'coming off' drug use had heightened his emotions. The chorus lines of "I try to stay awake and remember my name/But everybody's changing and I don't feel the same" echoed the broader themes of depersonalization and the misrecognition of the self as refracted in the changing states and dispositions of others. For Carl, these lyrics articulated his sense of isolation and concerns with his mental health. He explained, "when I listen to this, [I get] that feeling of just, like where you feel that you're different?" In this instance, the song tied Carl back to particular period of his life as well as to a particular dimension of his relationship with his mother. Reflecting further, he suggested that his current state determined the way in which these deeply held memories affected him.

Depending on where I am in my life...alright, I'm on the floor at the moment, I'm on my knees, I'm in [prison]. So it, so it erm...it brings the sad part of it. But I could also be outside, if I was driving in my car and I was with my boy, yeah? I'd be happy, I might even still...it might even still get me upset. But it'd be a different kind of upset, than to how it would be in here, d'you know what I mean? **(Carl)**

As DeNora (2000:64-5) suggests, the significance of these memories lies in their potential for allowing us to register "'who one is' or 'where, interpersonally, one has been'" and, in doing so, to establish "one's self to one's self as an object of self-knowledge". Self-identity is thus built out of the threading together of memories into stories about the self, and, in this way, individuals are able to conceptualise themselves as a 'coherent being over time' (*ibid*: 66). Carl described how he had been reminded of this song whilst undertaking a substance abuse program at HMP South Hill. Here, aspects of Carl's identity, which were articulated within the lyrics of the song, became once more present to him via the memory it evoked. Comparing his present situation to that time, he was able to consider the durability of these components of the self and construct himself within a coherent narrative.

Devonte [30's, Remand] was explicit in describing how music had structured his identity from a young age and described his satisfaction in 'reminisc[ing]' about MCing at Garage concerts:

Garage is part of my identity, d'you know what I mean? Cos, what it is, I think...Growing up, it's memories that kinda comfort you, and I think, with Garage, I can always, erm- when I listen to it- I can always ...it just triggers an emotion, and ya kinda reminisce about the good

times. And I think...that's all you have really, it's memories, and that's what gets me through here, to be honest with ya...thinking about the good times and stuff. **(Devonte)**

Devonte equated MCing with building his 'self-esteem' as a younger man, as well as the satisfaction derived from this recollection of these feelings of competency and validation which he had described whilst being part of the Garage scene. Ron described how Luther Vandross' "Never Too Much" evoked memories of living the 'highlife' of drugs, clubbing, expensive drinks, and clothes. While Ron took pleasure in reminiscing about this 'exciting' period of his life, like Carl, the music engendered a reflection on his self in relation to this past situation:

I just look at it and I think 'wow boy', I wish my life didn't go down that way. I wish I had an education, you know, and to try and better myself, you know? Because I look at my brother and my sister, you know, they were nothing like that, you know? And they're happy, they're content. They're married and they're younger than me. I'm the oldest and I ain't got nothing. **(Ron, 50s, Unsented)**

As these accounts suggest, music enabled prisoners to reflect on their current situation and situate themselves within a consistent narrative based on the relations between people, places, and periods in their lives. Constituting identity in this way was an important component of prison life; Devonte and Carl's explicit references to the relation of these reflections to experience of imprisonment indicates how identity was often a fraught region of the self in prison. Crewe et al. (2020) describe the effects of imprisonment on the prisoner's sense of self and draw on accounts of long-term prisoners to illustrate the effects of 'dislocation' from the objects, relations, and practices that constituted the pre-imprisoned self. Jewkes (2012) describes how imprisonment can engender a 'suspension' of the self narrative, forcing prisoners to re-situate themselves in relation to their offence (Sparks, 2006; Crewe et al. 2020) as well as the temporal and spatial parameters of their lives (O'Donnell, 2014). As the above accounts demonstrate, music provides a tool to aid this reflexive process of stock-taking by allowing residents to constitute themselves as 'objects of self-knowledge' (DeNora, 2000:70).

This, too, coincides with Devonte's suggestion that this could provide a form of 'ontological security' or 'asylum' (DeNora, 2013:56) for residents by allowing them to emotionally inhabit past feelings of security, competency, and value that tended to be painfully absent from prison life.

Jack (50s, Long-Length, Early-Stage), who was at the early stage of a life sentence, reflected on the music of his youth describing the anti-authoritarian message of the 70s punk and mod movement

as an influence on his identity. He explained how the values of self-reliance and resistance to received wisdom become instilled in him during periods of difficulty. "The songs that I listened to when I was that age," Jack began, "going through [deprivation and uncertainty], they were all about hope and fight and changing the ball game in your head". He described how his unstable family life had forced him to be independent at an early age and how he saw music as an important tool for building resilience and 'coming back' from periods of hardship. Jack was facing a 30-year sentence and claimed to have 'got [his] head around' the 'enormity' of it all, illustrating what Crewe et al. (2020) refer to as a 'discourse of adaptation' to his radically altered future.

I live in a castle with a wall around me. You know, there's servants and guards looking after me, you know? They bring me food, they make sure I'm alright every morning, they make sure I'm alright every night. **(Jack)**

This discourse represents an inversion of the prison's punitive structure, in which Jack is situated as an entitled recipient of care and security while the prison officers and taxpayers are demoted to subservience. Jack described his approach as "play[ing] [the experience of imprisonment] against itself" and relied on shifting his "appraisal" of his circumstances through re-framing (O'Donnell's, 2014:226) his situation into a more manageable arrangement. Crucially, Jack's adaptive discourse borrows from the ethos which he identifies in the music of his youth: his phrase "changing the ball game in your head" encapsulates his approach to his sentence. Jack emphasised maintaining a "positive outlook" and this adaptive discourse was supported by music, whose lyrical and stylistic content provided an intellectual and affective resource through which to structure it.

Harvey [20's, Mid-Length, Early-Stage] was serving a short sentence and his adaptive discourse was also based around 're-framing' his sentence. His approach sought to minimise the significance of his imprisonment on his sense of self by declaring, "I'm already out, I just ain't there yet, d'you know what I mean? That's the way I look at it: the time already happened." In this instance, Harvey's approach to his sentence sought to negate its character as a major personal setback and re-frame it as an ineffectual and temporary disturbance within his self-narrative. This approach appeared to be articulated in various aspects of Harvey's daily life and his attitude towards his cell represented a continuity of his desire to avoid attaching meaning to his present situation:

People [have] come into the cell going, "oh you ain't got no bedsheets", they've looked at the sink and they've gone, "how do you live like this?" "Geeze, this is prison yeah? Don't

start questioning how I'm living because I'm not living, this is not my home. Okay? This is a temporary pit-stop. **(Harvey)**

To engage in habitual care for his environment would be to accept the impact of the prison on his sense of self, thereby undermining the perception of his sentence as a temporary diversion from his ordinary life. Charles, another short-term prisoner, held a similar attitude and had intentionally decided not to decorate his cell to avoid it “feel[ing] too much like home”. He described a “very conscious decoupling” between his self and his environment, explaining that his situation was “temporary”.

These accounts reflect Schmid & Jones' (1991) concept of 'suspended identity', which describes the process of adaptive self-construction which prisoners undergo as they enter the prison. As section 5.1 described, prisoners must learn to perform certain outward-facing characteristics in order to operate safely within the social and institutional structures of the prison. For Schmid & Jones, this represents the construction of a 'prison identity' (p.419) which, for first-time prisoners, becomes split-off from their previous, preprison identity. Rather than wholeheartedly adopting the new prison identity, Schmid and Jones illustrate the importance for many prisoners of maintaining the preprison identity and keeping it accessible and intact from the corrosive influence of the prison on the self. In order to meet the demands of the prison identity whilst retaining a sense that one is the 'same person' (*Ibid*:424) as one was prior to imprisonment, Schmid and Jones (1991) suggest that prisoners 'suspend' their preprison identity (*Ibid*).

Returning to Harvey, we see how music provided a means of effecting this suspension by providing a particular discourse of the self. Harvey had found adapting to the clothing of the prison initially difficult suggesting that he preferred to wear 'suits' on the outside. Referring once again to his affinity for the artist Meek Mill, he described how he had found comfort from this painful dislocation from his previous sense of self, embodied in part by his clothes.

...[Meek Mill] always talks about fakeness and realness, and that's what I like...see like I'm sitting here in these like...five years ago I'd never be sat here in these clothes. I'd have to try and look...make my image, care more about by image. And he sort of gives a wavelength about "don't worry about people think about you, it's where you're going, it's not where you're from"⁸, it's where you're off to, like. **(Harvey)**

⁸ The quote “it’s where you’re going, it’s not where you’re from” is a paraphrasing of an expression with a long history in Black American culture and charts back to the jazz singer, Ella Fitzgerald. In the 1980s the expression

Here a discourse around image, selfhood, and identity – conveyed through the music and ethos of an artist – provided a resource for Harvey to negotiate this disidentifying ‘assault’ on the self. Harvey’s assertion that “it’s where you’re going, it’s not where you’re from” constitutes a means of situating the self as something intrinsic and self-determined rather than an outcome of one’s circumstances. By conceptualising the self as an emergent form in this way it is placed out of reach from the daily indignities of prison life and left intact for Harvey to resume after he is released. Edward expressed a similar conception of the self and articulated this by distinguishing himself from “*criminal criminals*”:

They've got that mentality of evilness all the time. I'm not about that. I've just done a couple of little things, slipped off a good path, went down a bad road, and, messed up basically. But I'm gonna get back on the good path, what I've always been on, and go back to the normal Edward, because I'm a good person. **(Edward, 20s, Mid-Length, Late-Stage)**

Once again, Edward conceptualises himself through the metaphor of a journey, minimising the effect of imprisonment on the self by describing it as a temporary detour from an otherwise virtuous path. Edward’s account illustrates the conception of the preprison self as something separate from his immediate situation to be resumed on release; yet, moreover, the quote also shows how he positions this ‘dualistic’ (Schmid & Jones, 1991:419) arrangement in distinction from other prisoners who he defines as being morally compromised in an *essential* sense. For Edward, music provides a means of accessing feelings associated with his preprison self and he describes how these feelings helped to articulate the transience of his situation as well as his capacity to resume his ‘normal’ self.

If you've got the radio on and a good song comes on it just really lifts your spirit and just reminds you that it ain't going to be like this forever and you're gonna be out soon and you can get back to life and normality and everything can be happy again, you know?
(Edward)

Schmid and Jones’ (1991) concept of ‘identity suspension’ provides a useful framework for understanding the ways in which short-term prisoners negotiated the pains of ‘dislocation’ (Crewe et al. 2020). However, while their account provides a detailed illustration of how prison identities are formed, they provide less detail on how the ‘suspended identity’ is *held* in this suspended state. As they suggest, prisoners rely principally on the “memory of [their]

was brought back in the form of Rakim’s “It ain’t where you’re from, it’s where you’re at” from the song *In the Ghetto*.

biography" (1991:424) as the basis of their preprison identity, whilst the prison identity is constituted through continual performance. However, as this section has already shown, music can provide a means of enacting the preprison self in vivid ways as well as providing ways of conceptualising the self that are not limited to one's environment or indexed offence. Here, the exploration of music provides a way of extending our understanding of 'identity suspension' so as to apprehend the reflexive work required to maintain the 'dualistic self'. Returning to the discussion in section 5.1, we can see how practices of 'identity suspension' can be understood as adaptive strategies aimed at mitigating the transience of prison life for short-term prisoners for whom the prison identity represented a distinctly 'temporary and inauthentic' self (Crewe et al. 2020).

5.3.2 Identity and Adaptation (II): Change and Desistance

Schmid and Jones (1991) suggest that prisoners entering the middle part of their sentences may begin to fear that their prison identity is beginning to merge with, or supersede, their preprison identity. This echoes an anxiety also reflected in Crewe et al's (2020) account of long-term imprisonment, where prisoners described eventually accepting their prison identity as their 'true' identity after several years of resistance. While music was able to solidify feelings of preprison identity, it was also able to articulate changes in one's identity – this section explores that phenomenon further.

Entering the prison also required prisoners to re-determine which musical qualities were appropriate for their new situation. Edward [20's, Mid-Length, Late-Stage], for instance, perceived the qualities of house music as incompatible with his cell, "I won't listen to house music when I'm like indoors or [in prison]. At home, tell you the truth, I will when I'm getting ready to go out...I've got certain musics I listen to in certain environments, if that makes sense?" There was a tendency amongst respondents to recognise their tastes changing as they entered the prison and for those for whom dance music had been important to begin to listen to more lyrically-oriented music. Zach [20's, Mid-Length, Late-Stage] described his recent tendency towards rap since being imprisoned:

In jail I seem to find myself listening to a lot of rap tunes, rap music and a lot of soft tunes about girls and stuff. Because I'm in jail and I'm thinking about the crimes I've committed

and all the bad stuff and that, and I think about my girl and stuff, so I always listen to [rap music]. But when I'm on the out I don't really listen to a lot of rap tunes, you know? I prefer listening to house music and dance music, because I like to go out to clubs, and raves and festivals and stuff... **(Zach)**

Zach described how rap music allowed him space for introspection, equating the 'softness' of the music with a 'meditative' set of practices. This tendency for introspection was a common feature in many accounts of the prison and the long hours spent in cells provided ample opportunity to do so. The topics which Zach mentioned were commonly referred to as difficult and distressing; however, like the prison officers mentioned in section 5.2.2, the correct choice of music allowed Zach to permit them into his mind. While clearly still painful, Zach described his use of music as "therapeutic", indicating that he framed his practices of reflection and introspection as beneficial.

Jack [60's, Long-Length, Early-Stage] also described how his listening practices had shifted since entering the prison. He described himself as more "open-minded" to different genres of music and referred to the benefits of having more time to listen in these terms. "You can tend to get lost in it a bit more. You know?," he said. "Because you haven't got that, 'oh I've got to go and do this in a minute'." Other prisoners expressed a similar openness to considering new types of music. While limited access may have played some role, this tendency can also be considered in terms of reflexivity; prisoners sought to articulate the components of self which were both durable and those which required re-configuration within this new environment. While some attributed these shifts in taste to the prison environment, others envisaged more profound shifts within the self.

Liam [30's, Short-Length, Mid-Stage], for instance, had found his musical tastes shifting drastically over the recent years, moving from instrumental dance music to lyrical acoustic pop. This transition allowed Liam to reflect on his maturation, particularly as he stated, "That's how I know I've grown up, because I thought I'd never get out of it. I never thought I'd get out of listening to drum and bass." Liam's reflection on a component, which he had once considered to be an immutable aspect of himself, powerfully articulates the capacity for profound individual change. Devonte [30's, Remand], too, found himself moving away from instrumental music towards more lyrical rap and hip-hop tracks, describing this shift as getting in touch with his "sentimental side". To explain the reason for this shift he offered the birth of his daughters: "The birth of my first child as well, I'd say, has just opened me up a little bit more. It's just opened me up, it's like engaging

differently with music, shall I say." In Liam's case, the sense that he was maturing allowed him to imagine the capacity in which he *might* act, to alter DeNora's (2000:64) phrase, bolstering his resolve to maintain his desistance from drug use after his release. As Maruna (1999:9) states, desistance requires an individual to 'restructure his or her understanding of self'; the accounts in both this and the previous section illustrate some of the ways in which music has provided a means of re-configuring the terms of one's 'self-knowledge'.

Like many respondents, Liam perceived music and drugs to be closely aligned and described how social situations with his friends would often descend into drug use. While music taste is often described as a strong binding agency between individuals and social groups, it can also be highly distinctive and become attached to other values, judgments, and expectations about people (Bourdieu, 1984). In Liam's case, his shift in music taste allowed him to distinguish himself from his former friends by articulating his maturity in relation to them.

Like, for instance, my mate Rob. He's the same age as me, but I'd say I'm a lot more grown up. Even though I'm in jail, and he's not. I'm a lot more grown up than him now. I'll go round his house and he's still doing the same things he was doing a lot of years ago. He's still living at home with his mum. He's still up in his room listening to drum and bass while doing drugs (laughs) **(Liam)**

By distinguishing himself from his friendship group, Liam is able conceptualise himself in different terms, highlighting the contingent and situationally dependent nature of the self. Trevor (50s, Mid-Length, Late-Stage) also described how desistance involved both the 'shedding' of associations as well as the music that went with it. He described how his criminal syndicate had 'broke down' whilst he was serving a long prison sentence and these circumstances lead to a shift in his 'attitude' towards involvement in criminal activities. He described how music had been a 'strong part' of the group's structure and affiliations, explaining "[there] was music that certain of us would... that we'd only listen to [with] that group over here or that group over there, different tracks meant different things". This dense intertwining of music within the collective life of his criminal associates meant that Trevor detached himself from music completely; instead, he found satisfaction in work as a replacement to his 'interest' in record collection. The connection between music and collective affiliations constitutes an important feature of these accounts: music can constitute deeply held subjective relations to others. To detach one's self from these songs could provide agency in situations where group affiliations constituted deep-structured components of

the self, allowing individuals to detach from the attitudes and behaviours that existed alongside them.

As the previous section showed, conceptualising the self as a consistent and continuous form allowed residents to re-construct their preprison identity and find respite from the pains of 'dislocation'. However, as Crewe et al. (2020) suggest, for prisoners on long and indeterminate sentences entering later stages of their sentences, detachment from the preprison identity constituted an adaptive response to the profound alteration of a life-course. With Carl [30's, Long-Length], for instance, who was serving an indeterminate (IPP) sentence, the ability for music to identify consistent features of the self was less-reassuring, forcing him to confront inconsistencies in his behaviour that had led him to imprisonment:

I've got loads of things going on anyway (gesturing to head, meaning his mental health), but I just feel, I just, I dunno if it's me but I just feel erm...(long pause) I dunno, I just feel like my life has got to be better than this, d'you know what I mean? It's got to be better than this.

(Carl)

Like Liam, Carl was actively seeking to avoid types of music which he associated with both drug use and the associated criminality, using the term 'euphoric recall' to describe the intense memories associated with drug use. Carl described associating certain types of music with his criminal behaviour and recalled using music as a way of achieving the mood required for him to rob drug dealers: "when I'm driving to them I don't need to be listening to fucking Kylie Minogue 'I Should Be So Lucky', I need like some fucking gangster rap, d'you know what I mean like? (laughs)". However, the qualities of this music, when placed in another situation, became problematic to Carl who saw himself at a turning point in his life. He stated, "I find myself now trying to come away from that music really. Because it's related to my old behaviour, so to move on...". For Carl and Liam, music helped to construct their present selves in relation to the past ones, drawing on the aesthetic qualities of the music they listened to in order to articulate the shifts in themselves. For Liam, the 'mellow' characteristics of the artist Passenger – whose lyrical themes focus on love and relationships – were found to be more reflective of his current concerns having recently resumed a relationship with a former partner.

Crucially, it is also the distinction between 'mellow' music and the 'intense' dance music, that he had previously listened to, which assisted in this transition. It is also notable that 'mellow' and 'intense' are characteristics which can be attributed to both music and people. This

shows the extent to which individuals constitute themselves as aesthetic agents by drawing upon a melange of social, cultural, material, and discursive forms to make sense of themselves. Nick [30's, Short-Sentence, Late-Stage] expressed this sense of continuity with music in clear terms, narrativising his life alongside his love of music and, in particular, drum and bass. Drawing on the specific qualities of drum and bass music, he described how he saw the qualities of this genre reflected in his own characteristics:

But the drum and bass is what I've loved as a child, because, as a young kid I've always been like the class clown, I've always been cracking jokes, I've always been the guy that keeps a party going, I've always made everyone laugh. I've got a very quick-witted humour. I'm very, like, on the nose with my banter, and like, I say things that people like, couldn't think up in their head quick enough, and I'm, like, you know. So, I suppose it all suits my character. **(Nick)**

The quick, lyrical, and semi-improvised style of drum and bass MC'ing is perceived by Nick as a continuity of his personality, allowing him to construct a powerful affinity to the music. While Nick acknowledged the common association between drum and bass and drugs, as a performer he saw opportunities emerging within the genre for him to work on his craft and desist from drugs and crime. He stated, "I'm going crime-free, you know? I'm gonna concentrate on my music, it don't cost me nothing, apart from the set up". While Liam perceived drum and bass music to be a collective practice oriented around drug use, Nick's associations with the music more closely reflected his individual practices of self. Having learned how to MC over drum and bass beats while in prison, Nick had different and perhaps more varied associations with the music and his practice was tied to embedded feelings of value and competency. Rather than distancing himself from it, as Liam had, he sought to embrace it. Shaun [40's, Mid-] echoed similar sentiments to Nick's, describing how music had helped him to manage his substance misuse problems in the past: "I needed an avenue that allowed me to have time on my hands that I could use positively for myself. I don't mean positive for anyone else, but it was positive to me."

Music allowed residents to adapt their selves to the affective dynamics of prison life, and, in doing so, articulated aspects of the self that were both durable and contingent. By representing the self as contingent, music engendered an 'interruption' (Urie et al. 2019) of the self, allowing forms of creative reconstitution to occur. For many, this held the greatest significance for their life and hopes post-release; as Nick and Shaun had suggested, the durable nature of musical skills and

practices can allow some to scaffold their desistance by creating structures of stability against the highly uncertain prospect of release and resettlement.

5.4 Chapter summary

The aim of this chapter has been to explore the ways in which music has helped prisoners to regulate and construct a sense of self within the unpredictable and challenging environment of the prison. As a local prison, HMP South Hill was a distinctly transient place with high churn rates leading to low levels of trust between prisoners. This atmosphere of 'diffidence' (Crewe et al. 2014) forced prisoners to adopt defensive postures that required them to undertake emotional regulation strategies. This manifested as an orienting of the self around a posture of stoic masculinity whilst also maintaining an outward presentation of compliance and trustworthiness towards prison officers and staff. Music provided a tool for engaging in emotional regulation strategies, allowing prisoners to 'mask' certain emotions and evoke others in the form of 'fronts' (Laws and Crewe, 2016). Furthermore, prison officers relied on a range of musically assisted emotional regulation strategies in order to handle the highly dynamic and demanding requirements of their role.

In providing access to the self through the evocation of experiential memories, music assists in the ongoing process of reflexivity and self-narrativisation. Part of this process involves constructing ideas about the self and its subjective components as they relate to emergent experiences. As a profoundly disrupting experience, imprisonment requires individuals to engage in intense reflexive work to constitute the self in relation to an array of new challenges. For short-term prisoners, handling the complex requirements of prison life required a 'suspension' of the self and music provided both the aesthetic and intellectual resources required for prisoners to evoke and construct certain concepts of the self in order to conceptually situate it away from the influence of imprisonment. For others, music provided a means of rendering the self as a contingent and changeable form in order to conceptualise possibilities of desistant selves.

Chapter 6

Listening Together and Apart: Collective Identities and Practices

Introduction

This final substantive chapter builds on conceptual developments across the previous two chapters which have been primarily focused on the relations between self and environment. As a reminder to the reader, Chapter Four focused on the situated use of music within the cell, describing how the material features of the prison and its regime determined the ways in which music was used by prisoners, while Chapter Five showed how the reflexive creation of meaning through music provided an important means of constructing the self in relation to the changing environment in which prisoners found themselves. As DeNora states, these situated and semiotic aspects of music are 'inextricable' (2013:175) from each other and demonstrates how 'culture and agency' are reflexively constituted by actors within certain material situations. Following this analysis, this chapter considers the idea of culture within the prison and, in particular, the ways in which shared identities came to be recognised, formed, and enacted by participants within the cultural and material spaces they inhabited.

This chapter is about how music defined the contours of collective life in various ways, establishing lines of connection, distinction, and forms of collective practice. Where the previous sections have been focussed more on the individual and inter-personal uses of music this chapter takes a broader focus on the ways in which music constituted part of the prison's cultural life. The following section explores the ways in which music was used to order and define social groupings within the prison before looking in more detail at young people within the prison and specific cultural forms emergent from rap and drill. The final section seeks to extend the focus on the spatial and affective dimensions of the prison by exploring the 'atmospherics' (Anderson, 2009) of the institution.

6.1 Cultural Difference and Collective Affiliations (I): Region & Locality

Due to the nature of music as an expansive cultural space shared by both prisoners and non-prisoners, it is important to consider the extent to which 'importation' characteristics (i.e. 'features' of outside culture and society which are 'imported into the prison' and confound the formation of social bonds between prisoner groups) (Wheeler, 1962, cit. in Irwin & Cressey, 1962: 153) played a role in determining the collective affiliations and identities across the sample – particularly as they related to *region*. For younger men at HMP South Hill, localised identities offered an important point of reference which allowed them to articulate a certain set of collective values. As Phillips (2012) suggests, these localised identities come to articulate certain rules and behavioural expectations and - crucially, within the social lives of young imprisoned men - established lines of inclusion and exclusion between them and others. Elias expressed this in clear terms, illustrating how the dense social networks that crossed both London and the prison offered a short-cut sense of collectivity and community when a new face appeared on the wing:

I'm from London innit? But, you know what it is? It's like, see, if you're from London like, bruv, someone's gonna...see if someone comes on the wing (and) they're from London, like? Boom, cool, if you're from [my area], you either know me or you know...like...you'll... you'll either know man, or you'll know someone who knows me, because it's a community innit? If you're from [my area], you're...d'you know what I mean? We're gonna get along anyway because we're either gonna be friends or we're not gonna like each other, there's only two ways about it. If you're cool, and you (inaudible) and you're from [my area], I'm showing you love because you're from the same area as me, d'you know what I mean? **(Elias, 20's, Mixed Race)**

As Phillips (2012) explains, the significance of territorialised spaces for individuals subject to situations of uncertainty and instability – such as the recently incarcerated Elias -is that they can provide a sense of 'ontological' security (p.134). Here, a new arrival to the prison from Elias' area could be certain of being 'shown some love' because of their affiliation to a specific geographical locale, providing some semblance of stability and security in an otherwise insecure set of circumstances.

Phillips refers to such practices of territorialisation as 'arguably one of the oldest traditions of demonstrating working-class masculinity' (Phillips, 2008:131), illustrating how cultural forms come to be bound up and articulated within these spatialised strategies. However, participants in the current study also made it clear that this meant that conflicts between 'postcodes' (often referred to by prisoners to describe the inter-area conflict between groups of young people outside of prison) could create pronounced cleavages amongst prisoners, as Shaun explained:

There's a guy on my wing...he doesn't go off the wing because somebody got killed in Lewisham, 5 years ago! And they're still fighting over it now, and they'll attack you because you come from an area where that guy came from and got killed. **(Shaun, 40's, Mixed Race)**

While imported tensions and animosities certainly played a role in determining the social dynamics of the prison, prisoners were hesitant about attributing violence to 'gang activity'⁹, as Shaun suggested. For Zach, affiliation was based on less formalised networks and cultural affinities:

On my spur there might be a group of friends but because they're from [an urban] culture, they call themselves 'gang'. But they're not a gang, they've only just met each other, they're just friends, they just...it's the way they word things, and act around things is totally. Yeah, I can realise that, I say it myself, d'you know what I'm saying? I say "yeah, that's my gang", you know, and to say it to someone, they might think "ra," like, "they're actually gangin', they're actually getting a gang". But it's not, it's just the terminology of how I speak when I'm in jail and around certain peers and stuff. **(Zach, 40's, Mixed Race)**

As a prison in Greater London taking in both prisoners from areas of the Home-Counties as well as from London, locality and region were also pronounced features of the social life of HMP South Hill and respondents would frequently refer to distinctions deriving from these formations when discussing musical cultures within the prison, as well as day-to-day life on the spur. For residents such as Ollie, who were not from BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) groups within the UK, such links and distinctions illustrated the significance of locality but also highlighted a tendency for this to be perceived as a continuity with race:

There's a massive difference, people from urbanised areas, like for example [...] obviously most of the people here are from South London, but you do have people

⁹ The concept of the 'gang' is contested within in criminological discourse; however, it is outside of the scope of this study to address this in detail.

from the East, North, West, they come from all over. I mean people from council estates, I generally, I don't understand...they have different ways of talking, they have different ways of dressing. Or not just council estates, sorry, more urban areas, like...like, obviously you've got a lot of like...There's a massive difference between the whites and the blacks in here, like, for example but...you can't just put it down to [skin] colour. **(Ollie, 20's, White)**

Therefore, while Ollie suggests that cultural differences are determined to a large extent by locality, his comments towards the end of the quote illustrates a clearly racialised understanding of social difference within the prison, in-keeping with Phillips' (2008, 2012) reflections on the 'complex' relationship between race, region and locality among prisoners. While Ollie was keen to disregard race as an essential distinction, he described his difficulties with prisoners from deprived, predominantly black, urban areas in an inherently racialised way, for instance:

They all sort of act, they all hang around in gangs and they act like idiots...and I find that they have less manners, they don't really know how to talk to people, their communication skills are slightly lacking like. **(Ollie)**

Ollie's racialised conceptualisation of region matched that of several other non-BME respondents. Ron (50's, Black), for instance, referred to the 'rude' and 'hyped' (agitated and contentious) conduct of young black prisoners with frustration. As a prisoner who had come from the same inner-city region as those which Ollie referred to, Ron articulated his distinction from this group in terms of age, complaining "Yeah some of [the younger prisoners] ain't got no respect man. They're rude sir. They're rude. Very rude man. And they're on this hype ting. Always this hype ting." Aside from age, race, and locality, this youth culture was marked by its cultural signifiers and Ollie's reference to dress, and dialect in the previous extract are illustrative.

Above all, however, older and non-BME respondents tended to refer to music as a principal signifier of subcultural involvement which, in essence, acted as a racialised proxy for distinguishing between different racial, ethnic and socio-cultural groups via the types of music they preferred.

6.2 Cultural Difference and Collective Affiliations (II): Music as a Cultural Signifier

As the previous section showed, music provided a means for residents to work out the content of their own cultural forms and the meanings behind race, age, and locality as they intersected with the experience of imprisonment. However, *music* represented the most common articulation of difference in some instances and the distinction between residents of different regions, age groups, and races was also articulated in terms of cultural taste. 'Urban' and 'Black styles' of music were frequently referred to by prisoners who identified a range of affiliations, behaviours, and dispositions which they associated with the music:

[A]ll the rapping and grime and that, I can never relate to that sort of stuff because I ain't from London. I'm from Hampshire. So, erm, like up here it's all like people get stabbed and all this and I don't deal with any of that. It's all this gang culture and that, I don't deal with any of it. And er, where I'm from, if you've got troubles it's a one on one fight. That's it. It's still like that down there now. You don't get people going around stabbing people, robbing people and that. **(Liam, 30s, White)**

For Liam the music articulated a cultural difference between urban and regional spaces, situating him outside of the values and practices which he perceived as being part of urban life. He connected music to the role of gangs in escalating disagreements, feeding into the view of younger members of the prison as impulsive and combative. Jack saw affinity within the minor-key palette of Drill and UK-Rap music and the 'negative' attitudes of the younger, black prisoners:

You hear what these boys, especially the young black lads, are listening to...it's no wonder they're running around stabbing each other - it makes *me* wanna kill people, you know?! It's dirge. (CW: What is it about it, do you think?) It's just the way it's so negative. I mean I know that their lives are negative but...the songs that I listened to when I was that age, going through that. They were all about hope. **(Jack, 50s, White,)**

These accounts illustrate how musical qualities can come to construct cultural differences by ascribing assumed cultural practices, attitudes, and values upon those with which it was associated. Likewise, for Ollie, rap music was seen as a 'negative' influence which younger, black audiences were perceived as being susceptible to:

I loved Eminem. But we didn't take anything they said too seriously. This new generation are listening to Rap music, and listening, and taking it all well seriously, you know? And you get a lot of the guys in here, they rap themselves. Everything they rap about is "ah," you know, tying this person up, and stabbing this person, you know? There's no positive in it really. It's all quite negative, you know? They don't think nothing about running in your house and tying your parents up and stabbing people, or taking another bloke's girlfriend off them. You know? Stuff that I was taught is just completely wrong. **(Ollie, 20's, White)**

The white rapper Eminem played an interesting role and respondents such as Ollie and Liam who eschewed the violent, cold, and misogynistic lyrics of contemporary rap artists would express deep appreciation for Eminem who held a similar 'folk-devil' (Cohen, 1972/2002) position when he came to prominence in the 2000's. Tobias, a young, black resident who rapped, held similar concerns to Ollie about the corrupting influence of contemporary uk-rap. Tobias also drew on Eminem to articulate his point:

I remember when they used to like, give Eminem a lot of flack. Like saying that "ow his music corrupts the kids and that", and it would be like, "well, no it don't", it's what they choose to listen to is what you let your kids listen to or [whatever]...and all of this stuff and like. And I remember my mum saying like "yeah he's another rapper, bruv, how are you gonna try and say...he's giving his opinion, you can listen to it or not listen to it" but by this point now, with the current socioeconomic situation of people of ethnicity, the music is corrupting the children. It is. By this point now, it is. Given the current socioeconomic status of the [black] people, they don't need to be listening to that. **(Tobias, 20's, Black)**

Tobias situated his concerns within a distinct socioeconomic concept referring to the marginalisation of black people in his community. According to him, the image of the rapper as a ruthless and carefree status figure provided a seductive image to young men, and 'particularly' those from single parent homes. He explained further:

[Y]ou can grow up with a negative outlook on the world for your chances, but then...here comes Jay-Z and he "don't give a fuck! He don't give a fuck man! He's rootin' and tootin' (laughs) and he don't care man! He don't care!" Oh, so then like, you can then, like,

subconsciously- cos when you're young, you're an idiot (laughs)- so, like, more subconsciously than anything, you can...like, convince yourself that you're like this person, or that you wanna be like this person, and lot of people say "well I'm damn well gonna be like this person." And that's what happens. And then like they end up on a wing somewhere, or on a cemetery somewhere. Or, if they're lucky, on a stage somewhere. **(Tobias)**

This view was shared to some extent by several young, black prisoners who were quick to point out both the implausibility and inauthenticity of certain rap lyrics. Where older respondents and those who constructed themselves in distinction from these urban cultural forms tended to portray young people as passive consumers of violent and immoral content, young people were, in-fact, highly critical of the culture they consumed and, as the following sections will show, this criticism constituted the construction of both individual and group identities.

In essence then, music provided a material by which people made sense of the social and cultural terrain of the prison. Considering the fluidity and transience of life within the prison, the capacity of music to render the social environment sensible in various ways was an important feature. As this section has shown, however, the capacity of music to articulate certain aspects of the social and cultural world of the prison meant that it served to articulate lines of exclusion as well as inclusion. While structures such as sentence length and offence type were equally deterministic features of the prison's social environment, the combination of race, age, and region that coalesced around the urban, youth culture of the prison deserves more examination given the frequency to which it was referred, particularly in terms of the ways in which music engendered specific forms of cultural inclusion (as well as exclusion). Throughout the fieldwork, perhaps the clearest proxy for sociocultural in/exclusion was based on regional and racial lines and as the extracts in this section have suggested, the social and cultural signifiers that enabled these practices of social ordering coalesced around rap music.

6.2.1 Drill and Rap (I): Cultural Differences and Collective Affiliations

Every Saturday night, two music radio shows would dominate the spurs. Charlie Sloth on Radio 1 Xtra and Tim Westwood on Capital Extra were popular amongst the younger prisoners as they played urban music from the UK and America and provided a focal point in the activity sparse

weekend where residents were confined for longer periods of the day due to the reduced regime. As Elias explained, "You know how people on the outside, they'll go clubbing on the weekend, that's what they're looking forward to? Like, you see us, we're looking forward to [Charlie Sloth]". Tom (20's, black) described how he was able to always tune in via his window as his neighbours would tend to put their 'speakers' by the window 'for reception'. For those wishing to tune-in who did not have a radio and were unable to hear through a neighbour's window, gaining access was a high-priority and many would borrow radios for this period just to hear the new releases, interviews, and live performances (it's like if you don't have a radio you'll be like "yeah let me borrow it tonight, ah have you got...ah I need to listen to Charlie" [Elias, 20's, mixed]).

Like many others, new releases were especially important to Tom because they often featured new artists from the Drill scene that emanated from estates like his in South London. He described his close relation to some members of the scene, explaining, "sometimes they play the people that I like, the [his area] guys...every week he plays it actually." Elias expressed a similar sense of relatedness when considering the London rap scene, "you see most of these rappers from London, I either know them or I know what they're about, or I know their bredrins (friends)". As Elias suggests, the collective consumption of music culture constitutes a social space that extends beyond the cells to create a collectively felt affective experience. The significance of the Saturday night rap-shows was that it brought young people together by articulating shared points of cultural reference. Similar to the accounts outlined in the previous section in which music provided a relational bridge between residents, staff, and family, collective listening practices such as these enact cultural affiliations by evoking collectively held memories, feelings, and points of reference. Furthermore, this example of collective musical practice illustrates how the music provides an important medium for the importation of culture into the prison. As Richard Bramwell's (2015:23) study of UK Rap and Grime culture in London suggests, practices of 'collective listening' such as these can allow individuals to 'participate' in cultural formations outside of one's immediate situation. The radio shows curated by figures such as Tim Westwood and Charlie Sloth represented nodal points from which access to London's black culture was attained and constructed into weekly events. As the previous section showed, this loose cultural grouping of young, predominantly black Londoners held a significant role at HMP South Hill and in order to understand the role of music within the collective practices of prisoners it is important to contextualise them as part of this wider cultural form.

The excitement of the Saturday afternoon shows coalesced for many younger prisoners around the live 'fire in the booth' performance on the Charlie Sloth show. 'Fire in the booth' placed

the spotlight on an individual rapper, providing them with a beat and allowing them seven minutes to freestyle. Notable features of these performances were 'shout-outs' to individuals or particular regions and references to ongoing drama within the scene as well as occasional references to events in current-affairs. These features served to underline the 'imminent' and situated quality of the performance allowing listeners such as Tom to 'feel related, still' to their friends and family on the outside, as well as the cultural space they inhabited prior to imprisonment.

For most young black respondents within this sample, rap had been a part of their lives since childhood and it represented an important interface with their social and cultural world. Tobias [20's, Black], for instance, described how at the age of 11 he would come home after school to study popular American rapper's flows and write rhymes in their style "as if it was coursework". Like other respondents, he described being inspired by the emergence of the UK Garage act So-Solid Crew from his region of London, stating 'I heard that song [21 Seconds] and I was like, 'oh my days' (laughs) and literally 'oh my days, I can do that, I can do that better than them- I can do that...' (laughs)'. For Elias, rap was constructed as synonymous with youth ('It's from young...like, when you're young you rap') and the ubiquity of rap within predominantly black inner-London neighbourhoods was remarked upon by several respondents of various ages with the refrain "everyone's a rapper these days". At the time of the research, 'street' music was undergoing a period of growth within urbanised areas of the UK and the primary genres that had gained in national and international popularity were UK Rap and Drill. Deriving from south-London, Drill in particular represented young people at HMP South Hill's experience of urban life and notable artists would frequently emerge from within young prisoner's immediate social networks. As Elias' quote above suggested, the proximity between young black Londoners from inner-city estates and the artists who would be routinely played on Radio 1 and Capital FM meant that despite their physical separation from urban life, the inter-subjective character of the music retained its potency. The attraction which Elias felt to this style of music derived from the sense of resonance which descriptions of harsh, urban-life provoked. He described the satisfaction of hearing "real shit" which spoke to his own life experiences and those of his area. Tobias articulated a similar draw towards the feelings of representation which these styles of music offered:

When you're from the streets, for some reason, you'll always relish, not relish in hearing the truths, but you know it's the truth and you know that the powers that be, or whoever, are trying to mask it, or hide it- they don't advertise it. So when you're from the streets and you hear that, or you hear a rapper that's good at relaying it, like, you wouldn't...Like, I might hear a song and I will think different of

the boy, you might hear a song, or somebody might hear a song and think "oh that young man's a demon", but I'll hear the song and understand what's made him feel like that. **(Tobias)**

The satisfaction derived from styles such as Drill was thus seen in terms of the signification and representation of their 'lived conditions' (Bramwell 2015:9), which created a cultural space separate to themselves. Ilan describes the core mentality of Drill as a "commodification of [a] kind of 'will to representation' where being understood as a tough, uncompromizing criminal type can lead to success in the music business." (2019:14-15). This 'will to representation' can be seen in Elias and Tobias' accounts of hearing narratives representative of their own experiences and this sense of being represented appeared to evoke feelings of empowerment. The satisfaction of hearing 'truths', as Tobias suggested, can be understood in terms of enacting a form of identity based around shared social and cultural experiences as well as collectively held frames of interpretation. Elias described the common themes of Drill music, referring notably to the significance of prison:

Money, selling drugs, doing badness...d'you know what I mean? Real shit, real life, like, everyday shit...like growing up, going to jail, like, bare man [lots of people] rap about jail. Bare man rap about dramas, bare man rap about your bredrins [friends] dying, getting stabbed, getting shot, all this bullshit. It's literally just fuckery [insidiousness, 'no good'], but that's where we're from, that's what happens, that's the rules of everyday life. That's how it goes down. **(Elias, 20's, Mixed)**

Prison is often positioned in Drill lyrics as a continuity of the urban experience and this convergence has been further underlined by frequent shout-outs at the beginning of tracks to friends and relations in prison or 'pen' as it was frequently referred to, as well as the recent trend of recording verses via prison phone or even as mobile-phone videos¹⁰. This convergence between black, urban communities and the prison is documented in Drill music and authors such as Fatsis (2019) and Ilan (2019) describe how attempts to criminalise Drill artists constitute a continuity of efforts to curtail and police black expressive forms.

The often violent and criminal themes of Drill music became associated with the increase in violent crime in London in 2018 and at the time of the research the genre was transitioning into the mainstream as a new-found 'problem genre' (Fatsis, 2019). Central to the measures brought in

¹⁰ Piece of Mind – Joey Badass, Intro – Headie One, Kodak Black – Freestyle

by lawmakers to address this trend was the assumption that 'gang' violence was a principal cause of the increased violence, and that in turn, was bound up with Drill and Rap music. Despite this assumption not being born out in evidence (Fatsis, 2019), police begun to perceive taunting references to violence as inciting gang-violence and banned or, severely curtailed, young rappers from releasing music under Criminal Behaviour Orders, legislated for under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. As Ilan (2019) suggests, this overly literal understanding of 'street culture' overlooks the often 'phatic' nature of these interactions as exchanges of sentiment and feeling rather than literal statements (Ilan, 2019:10). Ilan refers to the role of violent and criminal language as a means of asserting authenticity and this was borne out amongst respondents involved in the Drill scene. As Tom suggested, references to violent acts as well as details of the drug trade were seen to provide credibility to the identities which they presented and status or 'clout' could be gained through a well-timed reference to the death of the member of an opposing gang in a lyric to indicate awareness and possible involvement in acts of violence as they occurred. Tom described further how notable Drill artist, Loski, had risen to popularity with such a reference in one of his early songs:

Loski was talking about, erm, "the shotgun, long like...um, Gora's coffin" - Gora's a guy from the opposite side that died, and he's just mocking his death. That's what everyone liked about it, like, everyone just started ripping on all like, "Gora's coffin." **(Tom, 20's, Black)**

Often gruesome images depicting acts of murder and violence would appear across Snapchat (a video messaging application) hours after they had occurred, and insiders took a grim pleasure from documenting the drama that unfolded across different parts of London. This tendency illustrates what Ilan (2009) refers to as the 'proliferation of online street culture' which has been perceived as a contributory factor in the increased levels of violence. As Irwin-Rogers and Pinkey (2017: 24) suggest, the increased use of social media provides both an audience as well as a longevity to acts of humiliation, potentially increasing the stakes in taunting exchanges between young people. As Elias ruefully explained, "instead of stabbing you, people will get out their fuckin' phone, and their Snapchat, and stab you, and put it on Instagram...like, 'Hahaha look, he's a pussy, he ran in a shop [to hide]". Young respondents were ambivalent about this phenomenon, recounting these events with a mixture of humour, incredulity and embarrassment. It was common for those both within or around the Drill scene and those outside it to reproduce a discourse of concern with the violence depicted within the music and would respond with mild exasperation at the need to deal with these themes in order to fit in with the popular tastes. As Tom stated, "You

gotta talk a lot of violence to get far. A lot of violence man. No one's gonna listen to you (if you're like) "ah, go to school". No one's gonna listen to that (laughs)." This tension between commercial interests and authenticity is discussed in Ilan's (2019) analysis, and numerous respondents expressed ambivalence about the tendency for young rappers to exaggerate their involvement in criminal activities. Elias described such inauthenticity as 'immature' but acknowledged the limitations of maintaining a criminal lifestyle as an aspiring artist explaining, 'if you're still selling drugs yeah, and doing violent things X-Factor aint gonna call you like what they did to Stormzy and say 'yeah, [we] want you to be Nicole Scherzinger's friend at her house'(laughs)'. Artists such as Stormzy provided powerful illustrations of the possibilities of music for young residents and Elias was able to list a range of notable artists from his area, emphasising their social and cultural proximity ("before they were rappers they were normal guys from your ends (neighbourhood), you know them. Normal geezers, and then like "raa", they're a superstar"). As Miranda (2013) argues, the heightened significance of musical artists for young people derives from the fluidity of the self during this period of development. Finding the self in flux and having fewer durable resources through which to engage in narrative construction, adolescents tend to base parts of their identity on other people. As the accounts have suggested, however, the artists identities were not uncritically appropriated by respondents and this is perhaps due to the social proximity (or overlap in many cases) between audience and performer. Tobias reflected further on the embeddedness of rap artists within inner-city neighbourhoods and his account illustrates this significance of artists as role-models.

Um, with rappers, rappers are essentially heroes. Like, we look at them from our communities, we more or less look at them as heroes. I'm actually realising that as I'm speaking with you. That we look at them as heroes, because this is the brave person who, who's gonna stand up and say it all. **(Tobias)**

Tobias' account indicates a degree of responsibility held by rappers as representatives of 'communities', illustrating the importance of being able to situate oneself geographically in order to claim authenticity. As Forman (2004) suggests, authenticity in Hip-Hop derives in part from being able to claim access to a regional and cultural experience and this assertion is similar to Phillip's (2012) analysis of urban territorialisation as a reference point for the performance of masculinity.

Drill provided access to forms of identity based around the collective experience of urban-life for young predominantly black men. As we have seen throughout this section, respondents were critical consumers who were able to freely discuss the complexity of representation and

authenticity. Underpinning much of the affinity held between young people and their music was the ways in which it allowed listeners to enact localised identities and systems of value. The significance of locality within the construction and performance of masculinity illustrate how, for some, the prison was experienced as more continuous with preprison life than others. As such, urban culture came to shape the prison in important ways and the cultural divide between those from urban and suburban regions attests to this. While significant continuities existed across the prison and the inner-London estate, it is important to apprehend the ways in which these cultural forms were adapted, and the following section explores these practices of adaptation in detail.

6.2.2 Drill and Rap (I): Reputation and the construction of an authentic imprisoned self

At the time of the fieldwork several high-profile figures in the UK Rap scene were serving at HMP South Hill, one of whom was a frequent attendee in the music-tech classroom. While these names were largely locally known and had not broken into mainstream coverage, it was clear that the world of UK Rap was continuous with the prison in various ways. George, who claimed to be frequently recognised by prisoners as a notable South London rapper, described the proximity he felt to the outside when he attended the class stating that it made him feel 'closer to the road'¹¹. For him, participating in the music-tech class facilitated a changing orientation towards his life post-imprisonment, and being able to record music allowed him to furnish his musical projects with a sense of reality as he neared release. George's music had always afforded him a certain status within the prison and his relationship with a notable UK Rap artist, expressed through frequent shout-outs in his songs, meant that George was frequently recognised by prisoners; importantly, this relational link conferred a degree of 'respect by association' onto George, with implications for easing his prison experience in some sense:

Yeah [getting recognised] happens all the time. To be honest and that, I'm just paid a little bit more respect than maybe someone else might, without having to put in any work, do you know what I mean? Because they understand that, at some point in your life you've already been there and done that and worn the T-shirt.

¹¹ Meaning outside the prison in ordinary life, though for some this had connotations with an offending lifestyle (which was commonly referred to as being 'on road').

And it's not from your mouth that they've heard it, it's from someone else's, so, they're meeting someone they've already heard about. It's not like I'm sat in a room and I'm telling you a story and you don't know...you know. I don't have to say anything or do nothing. So I'm alright. (**George, 30's, Black**)

George described how the references to him had given him a 'platform' for his own music, as well as enhancing his status within the prison. As the references were to criminal activities, George's place within the masculine hierarchy of the prison was assured and he was able to leverage respect wherever he found himself.

These social status shortcuts – described by Crewe (2009:317) as 'reputation networks' – extend across both prisons and the communities from which prisoners had come, and offer a means for swiftly evaluating the identity and integrity of others, within a broader generalised sense of distrust and uncertainty within the social life of the prison, as discussed at the beginning of the previous chapter. As Elias similarly explained, the 'reputational network' relied on being able to verify people's claims and it was expected that newcomers provided particular details.

When you meet people in prison, everyone's got a story to tell, everyone's got a background innit? So when you meet someone it's like "what you in jail for, where you from, what's your name?" like. And you've gotta prove yourself, you've gotta talk [to] everyone, you get to know people, we're with people all the time. (**Elias**)

As Elias suggests, reticence to engage with the social milieu of the prison would cause suspicion, and the account at the start of this section illustrates how music functioned as a space for enunciation and judgement. This can be seen in the careful attention which members of the music-tech classroom gave to the verse and the references to the past and index offence (i.e. the one for which they were currently imprisoned).

"Recording!", shouts one of the young men huddled around a microphone in front of the screen. After a short pause the speakers surge to live, projecting a loud, mid-tempo, UK-rap style beat. The newcomer to the class, a man whose height belies his young age of 19 or 20, begins to rap, picking up the lurching but purposeful flow that has come to characterise the genre in recent years. The verse is a raw and direct mixture of biographical narrative threaded together with the characteristic gestures of humour and defiance that have made the style so popular amongst young people, and particularly those who live in urbanised areas. Aside from those intently working on their own projects, we all listen in as the young man describes how he came to be imprisoned. Looking at the other members of this central group I sense that his story is being evaluated on more than an aesthetic level. As he describes his offences and the context to these actions, there is an

awareness from both audience and performer that these details as well as their narrative coherence matter as one enters the prison.

The music technology class is run by Greg, a man in his early 40's, who's relaxed, and quietly enthusiastic, art-teacher-like sensibility is occasionally tested to a small extent by the often caustic, and obscene output of his younger students. A crude line about a woman's genitals from the new member of the class elicits muted laughter and shaken heads from the group, and a quiet "oh come-on..." from Greg. At the end of the class he explains to me how he used to be more censorious of his student's lyrics but had come to accept the importance of facilitating free expression in his classroom. Having worked in prisons for several years Greg was attuned to many of the dynamics which he saw in his classroom and saw the benefit that he provided as, at least in-part, as way for the young men to relieve the tension and anxiety they experienced in other parts of the prison.

*It was clear that the newcomer was still trying to grasp the rules that contributed to the uniquely studious and productive atmosphere within the classroom and when, while recording a loose freestyle, he referred disparagingly to the Traveller population of the prison it was not Greg who intervened but Marcus, a young and often serious member of the group who took on a role similar to classroom assistant. "That's shit man, you've gotta write some more stuff.", he says as he cuts the beat off from the speakers. Those of us paying attention look around momentarily to gauge whether any offence has been caused within the room before Greg puts the newcomer at ease, "Sometimes you just need to listen to your voice through the speakers to get used to it." **[Based on Fieldnotes: 9/1/2018]***

The extract above is taken from the music tech classroom and illustrates how rap is embedded within the social life of the prison and serves as a site of enunciation. As Elias explained further, rap provided a way for young prisoners to assess the consistency, integrity and validity of these public enunciations, and this relied heavily on the cultural and geographic proximity between prisoners.

You see rap, it's like...you can relate to stuff innit? So you see (if) someone's rapping about something, like, they're rapping about something you get, and then more...someone on the wing listens to you, listens to us to see if you [are consistent] **(Elias, 20's, Mixed Race)**

For young prisoners who had come from particular regions of London then, the experience of 'social' or 'relational dislocation', identified as inescapably intrinsic to imprisonment (cf. Crewe et al, 2020), was less absolute than for those who did not hail from these areas. That is, for a large number of prisoners within this study, incarceration less commonly represented 'social death' (cf. Wahidin, 2004), as this received wisdom about the pains of imprisonment was undermined by the continuity of the prison with the deprived urban estate (as acknowledged by Waquant, 2001). Although this provided benefits for prisoners with relevant 'street capital' (Ilan, 2019) to draw on,

for others this made the task of identity construction more complex. Shaun (40's, Mixed Race), for instance, was an older prisoner but came from the same cultural and geographic location as those young men outlined in this section. He explained the difficulties in maintaining a hyper-masculine identity, illustrating how music served as a space of enunciation and performance: "they're always rapping about shootings and this and that, and it creates a persona about you innit? Now you've got to live up to that persona." Shaun's account illustrates the importance of authenticity within London's black youth culture in terms of the maintenance and construction of certain identities. Crucially, it is through being able to publicly enunciate this identity via internet media sites such as YouTube and other social media that young people seek to gain control over the public representation of self. As Irwin-Rogers and Pinky suggest (2017), it is through the ability provided by social media to selectively construct the outward representation of self that individuals were able to hide 'any insecurities or lack of self-confidence with images that conveyed power and status' (p.17). As Shaun suggests, rap constituted a continuity of this practice of self-presentation and went on to suggest performances such as these could lead some into trouble when they entered the prison:

I can understand why that generation listen to that music, because it reflects them, but it just reflects a life of violence and gang culture and ultimately you get caught up in that. You're either dead or you're in jail. And then you'll come to jail and you'll see some real badman, because you can be a badman with a gun in your hand and weigh 7 stone. But when you come to jail you see some real gangsters who are never getting out and jail, and you have to cool yourself because you ain't got no gun no more. **(Shaun, 40's, Mixed-Race)**

While rap provided a space for prisoners to enact consistent and continuous identities, it was also a discursive space where the concepts of self and identity were subject to interrogation and re-configuration. Rapping also allowed a space to examine and reconfigure the *authentic* self within the distinctly complex situation of being between prison and 'on road'. In this sense, the concern with authenticity can thus be understood both in terms of ethics and aesthetics. The embeddedness of rap within the daily lives of young prisoners from an early age meant that questions about the authenticity of artists were also bound up with cultural practices and values. The discussion of authenticity must not be seen as a static discourse but as an ongoing conversation within a distinct cultural context that allowed young people to establish the nature, boundaries, and ethics of the self within their distinct "lifestyle".

Tobias, for instance, described how the concept of authenticity had changed within his lifetime:

Rap used to have... you used to be able to listen to a song of an artist and learn something, it used to be about kicking rhymes, kicking knowledge. How real is this person? How...how honourable is this person? How...how...strong of character is this person? How much integrity did this person have? Not particularly how 'gangster' is this person, that was a later forthcoming from it. That sprouted off it, in particular gangster rap... **(Tobias, 20's, Black)**

This orientation towards hyper-masculine performativity was recognised by Elias too who perceived references to overt acts of violence and criminality as 'immature' and largely misleading. Furthermore, while some level of representation and authenticity was required of artists, overly detailed accounts of criminal practices risked subjecting the artist and others to increased police scrutiny, or worse, constituted inadvertent 'snitching' (Tom).

For older prisoners too, the dimensions of authenticity appeared to be shifting and many put this down to social media. Nathan, for instance, blamed social media making details of criminal activity more accessible to younger generations:

you can just put in google or, in youtube, anything...anything at all, you can put in there. And it will come up. Anything, how to get to space, how to become a drug dealer, how to...it will come up. How to make drugs...it will come up. So people...instead of actually living it- I'm not saying they should be living it and doing it- but what I'm saying is, instead of singing about their experience they can sing about stuff they know nothing about. **(Nathan, 30's, Black)**

While rap allowed some a powerful sense of agency over the representation of identity, the continuity between prison and 'road' meant that these claims were subject to close scrutiny when combined with the distinctly inquisitive nature of the prison's social world. Elias' claim that "you've gotta talk" illustrates the pressure faced by those entering the prison to represent themselves as a coherent and authentic self despite the sometimes-contrasting nature of prison and pre-prison identities (Schmid & Jones, 1991). While rap could provide a means to construct exaggerated and inauthentic representations of self, residents who rapped also articulated the value of rapping as a means of accessing and expressing forms of authenticity that went beyond the rigid prison and preprison forms.

Elias explained his own rationale for remaining true to his experiences in his music:

...if I blow, I'll blow being real. If I don't blow being real, it weren't meant to be, I'm not gonna change. Because music's music, innit? It's origin...that's what music is, it's you, innit? There's no two people who are gonna be exactly the same. **(Elias)**

Elias' account reflects the extent to which musical expression was bound up with their subjectivity. His description of music as 'origin' and 'you' illustrates a concept of the self that captures the '*imminence*' that Braithwaite (1984:19) describes as intrinsic to the Jamaican oral tradition which is discussed further in this section. Tobias held a similar perspective, stating, "there's untold amounts of people who can rap. And each one of these people has their own energy, like their own magic, like they've got their own way of making it happen." In these accounts, rap is situated as a vehicle for expression by making apparent the indivisible qualities of the self. Devonte described his surprise when encountering younger prisoners with whom he found it difficult to converse, explaining "next minute they're rapping and they're expressing themselves and, d'you know what I mean? And I think, "alright, good on ya". As these accounts suggest, the concern with inauthenticity amongst rappers must thus be situated alongside the perceived possibility of authentic self-expression. For Tom (20's, Black) rap was continuous with practices of self-improvement and he saw reading as a way of gaining 'knowledge and understanding' which would, in turn, help him 'express' himself better. Similarly, Zach described writing music throughout the day whilst locked in his cell and described how he would read through a dictionary to find words to incorporate into his verses:

I looked in the dictionary the other day and found a word called 'blotto' which means very drunk. I've heard no-one say blotto. Now I've got the wing saying it, what means I can't get the world saying it? D'you know what I'm saying? I studied the dictionary to try and find something and then use it. Because there's loads of words out there, there's a hell of a load of words out there that people just don't use. And it's just about trying to tap into that.
(Zach, 20's Mixed-Race)

Where Zach's approach reflects a desire to distinguish himself through his expressive wordplay it is in relation to an audience of his peers that these expressions take on meaning. While the previous chapter has shown how music provides resources through which, in DeNora's (2000:65) words, "one registers one's self to one's self as an object of self-knowledge", the distinct cultural properties of rap and its associated practices reflect a desire more aligned with the registering of the self as an object of collective-knowledge to others.

Bramwell (2015) draws on Kamau Braithwaite's (1984) assertion of the 'inter-subjective' quality of the Jamaican oral tradition, describing this feature as an 'essential component' in the development of London's black culture. As Braithwaite suggests, the emergence of this form of 'total expression' derives from the absence of material and technological distractions in Jamaica, leading individuals to 'depend on *imminence*, the power with-in them-selves, rather than the technology outside themselves.' (Braithwaite (1984), Cited in Bramwell, 2015:18, emphasis in the text). He goes on:

Reading is an isolated, individualistic expression. The oral tradition on the other hand demands not only the griot but the audience to complete the community: The noise and sounds that the maker makes are responded by the audience and are returned to him. Hence we have the creation of a continuum where meaning truly resides. (*Ibid*)

The embeddedness of rap within the culture of young, black Londoners as well as the distinct cultural traditions from which it derives requires that we consider it within its own terms as a distinctly inter-subjectively oriented form. Rap provided a space for young prisoners to undertake self-expression with the role of the audience playing an important role, as Braithwaite suggests, in providing an environment for the construction of meaning. However, these cultural practices must, as Braithwaite (2018) suggests, be understood within the context of the prison and the distinct social and inter-personal dynamics that existed there. Claims about the self allowed young men to express themselves as knowable entities within the complex and overlapping inter-personal world of the prison-road continuity, however as various accounts suggest, these claims were subject to forms of scrutiny as part of the relation between audience and performer. While it remains a persistent feature of rap and Hip-Hop culture, the prevalent concern with the question of authenticity amongst younger respondents takes on a distinct significance within this continuity between urban and carceral spaces where status, masculinity, and security are tightly bound up within an often distinctly in-authentic environment. As this section has sought to show, rap constituted both a continuity of and a way of coping with the continuity between inside and outside for young, predominantly black, urban prisoners. Within this distinct sub-cultural space, rap constituted an important feature of collective life, by enabling a space of expression and discourse. Understanding the role of rap within the prison involves understanding it in this inter-subjective context, as something both lived and performed. The following section departs from rap as a principal focus but continues to draw on the expressive qualities of music by exploring the inter-subjective dynamics made possible through the configuration of music, sound and space.

6.4 'Listening along', Broadcasting and Atmosphere: The Affective and Collective Experience of Music in Prisons

As Chapter 4 showed, the spatial and material features of the prison played an important role in determining social relationships between residents by determining the conditions in which they were able to interact. The prison forced individuals into co-habitation and contact through the sharing of cells whilst, at the same time, separating them from others, both within the prison and outside it. For long periods of the day, prisoners were separated from direct contact with others, save for their cellmates; however, other forms of relation and contact were made possible through the acoustic properties of the prison. Though often fleeting, indirect and non-descript, these forms of contact could nonetheless provide the basis for significant affective experiences.

Shaun described listening out for music played in his vicinity explaining, "sometimes, what I'll do is...I'm sitting in my cell and I can hear someone playing music somewhere and I'll just turn my TV down, and I'll just listen to their music." Shaun [40's, Short-Length, Mid-Stage] enjoyed the music from his upstairs neighbour who would often play loud, old-school house music which came clearly into his cell. Though he only knew his upstairs neighbour by sight, the music allowed Shaun to relate to the younger man, and situate him in relation to his own experiences and tastes, "I bet you most of these songs was out before he was born, and I can hear him singing away so he's probably grown up with his parents listening to that song, you know like that?" Similarly, Tom [Mid-Length, Early-Stage] would listen in to his neighbours on the spur through the window and would use the cultural signifiers of the music to situate himself within the social environment of the spur. He described comparing his tastes against others to determine whether he was a "normal guy".

While this practice can be seen as a means of augmenting one's access to music given the frequent scarcity of music technology, it can also be seen as a means of *attuning* (Højlund, 2017; Brown et al., 2019) the self toward the social and affective dynamics of the prison. Like Brown's study within a Forensic psychiatric hospital, the accounts above illustrate how prisoners come to develop a rich understanding of their environment through continuous multi-sensory engagement with it. Drawing on Serres (1982 Cited in Brown et al, 2019), Brown et al. describe how hearing involves constant input and thus requires the subject to differentiate between meaningful sounds and noise. Subjects come to 'organise' their senses in relation to their environment through

'practiced attunement and inculcation particular sensory discrimination which acts [as] the basis for broader kinds of organizing' (Brown et al., 2019:8).

To hear a familiar song and turn down one's radio or television to hear it was both a *private* and a *public* experience. While listeners remained physically separate, the act of attunement connected them with similarly attuned listeners in a community of collective feeling.

Shaun highlighted the collective significance of music, referring to its role as a way of mediating the communally felt pains of cohabitation:

You've got all different kinds of people, with all different mindsets all in this very small, cramped space and...I just think that to be able to live in that environment and co-habit without killing each other is kinda good, and I just think that some people's outlet is music. **(Shaun)**

Likewise, Devonte [30's, Remand] described "listening along" to the music played in his vicinity, and, while he acknowledged that older prisoners would sometimes suffer from being subjected to loud music at certain times of the day, he perceived the presence of music as an important part of the 'environment'. He explained, " I think [music's] definitely important for the environment as a whole. Because, like I said, it relaxes everybody". Devonte further illustrated the capacity for music to create a collectively attuned space, describing music as a shared and largely appreciated resource on his spur, "I think in this environment, everybody kind of accepts it because, in a weird way, it's like a privilege. And it kinda gives you that feeling of normality". As Devonte suggests, music constituted a determinant feature in the perceived mood or 'affective atmosphere' (Anderson, 2009) of the prison and both he and Tom's reference to the feeling of 'normality' which music provided is illustrative of this. As Højlund (2017) suggests, attunement is not simply an intervention upon the sensory faculties but a reflexive ordering of the self and the environment through the organisation of the senses. This collective experience of normality, referred to by Devonte, thus reflects an interaction between space, materiality, sound, and other sensorially attuned individuals.

The account described in section 6.2.1 illustrates one of these moments of affective community as young prisoners, separated through thick concrete walls, would construct shared feelings of excitement and togetherness by tuning into the Saturday evening rap shows. Like the accounts in the previous chapter, Tom described turning his own radio down in order to apprehend the 'mutual feelings' of others tuning into the same shows as him ('If everyone's listening to what I'm listening to I'll turn [my radio] down [to listen]'). Both Devonte and Tom's accounts of listening

out for the music on their spurs illustrates the capacity for music to constitute part of the affective environment of the prison, illustrating how forms of relation and collective experience occurred despite the spatial restrictions of the prison.

Those with loud stereos became important actors in determining these affective dynamics and DeNora's (2013) concept of 'broadcasting' is useful for making sense of the ambiguity between private and public listening evidenced in the above accounts, and which, when applied to the prison, facilitates a consideration of the different interpretations readings amongst those who are attuned to it. Tobias [20's, Long-Length, Early-Stage] illustrates this tendency to interpret the music he heard, attributing certain affective qualities depending on the style of the music:

If someone's pumping out a song in prison, it's really gonna be a, really, realistically, more than likely it's gonna be an upbeat song, or it's gonna be some sort of...unless that person's going through particular woes this week (laughs) or something...it's gonna be an upbeat song, otherwise he wouldn't really play it out loud like that. **(Tobias)**

Rob (White, 30's), an officer, perceived the projection of status to be an important motivation behind broadcasting, and described the loud rap music, which he associated with younger prisoners, as an expression of "machismo." While prisoners tended to corroborate this claim, Tobias described the motivation in more communal terms; that is, in facilitating broader access to particular records, almost as a public service: 'if you've got an exclusive CD that no-one else has got, you're gonna pump it up to the loudest, let everybody hear it'. Zach [Mid-Length, Late-Stage] described leaving his radio on for his neighbours while he went to music class in the morning, explaining, "I got a cell at the end of the landing and people like to stand outside my cell...and not a lot of people got radios here". High status prisoners such as Nathan [Long-Length, Late Stage] and Ollie [Long-Length, Late Stage] acknowledged that the music played through their loud stereos could be heard throughout the houseblock but expressed indifference to the judgements of others. As Nathan stated, "I play loads of different music anyway so it doesn't really bother me. I don't care." However, while Ollie described being uninhibited by the judgements of others, he described sometimes choosing his music in relation to an imagined audience:

When I play a song on the stereo, I'll play something after that and I'll think like, if I'm playing Garage or House music, or Dance music, I'd play a song that I would play after a mix. So say I was mixing, I'd think to myself "right, what song would go well after this one. But if I play that one I'll load it onto the deck". **(Ollie)**

Ollie was aware of his capacity to alter the affective state around his cell and would seek to structure particular 'atmospheres' (Anderson, 2009; Reidel, 2015) by selecting appropriate and consistent musical qualities. Ollie's practice can be seen in terms of atmospheric staging which refers to the purposive strategies by which spaces are infused with sensory and emotional inflections. Deriving originally from the study of architecture, atmosphere is understood as a spatial phenomenon which occurs across relations between subjects and objects. Furthermore, the dimensions of this 'attuned' space (Heidegger 1962:134) are often fluid and undefined and causally diffuse. Naturally occurring atmospheres tend to be formless, yet to stage them is to integrate forms of discursive and sensate agencies in order to evoke certain mood relations between subjects and their environment. Riedel's (2015) work around music and atmosphere characterises music as 'affect' and describes how music can constitute atmosphere by binding-together disparate discursive, sensory, and affective agencies across the subjective features of a space. Jack [Long-Length, Early-Stage], for example, described a similar practice to Ollie and would intentionally angle his hi-fi speaker through his window in order to enhance the mood of those exercising in the yard ('Occasionally on a nice sunny day [I'll] blast something out of the window that's gonna cheer everyone up'). Devonte described an instance such as this from the perspective of the yard:

Yeeah, it was nice. Everyone had their little bottles of drinks, [they] was doing pull-ups and everything, the music was playing. Everyone seemed a lot [more] relaxed, d'you know what I mean? There was a good vibe, a nice vibe there. So uh, yeah last Saturday was cool. But at the same time though...it does kinda [make you] think "ah being outside of this confinement would be much better". **(Devonte)**

This account illustrates the atmospheric quality that music brings to spaces within the prison, allowing moments of intensity and alterity to form within the everyday experience of imprisonment. Devonte's assertion that "You do kind of forget where you are" in instances such as he described is telling of the sort of language used to describe these atmospheric intensities. Anderson's (2009) description of atmospheres as 'uncertain' and 'shifting' (p.78) moments of affective intensity is reflected in the way prisoners spoke about these events. While Devonte's account is redolent of the ambiguity characteristic of affective atmospheres, other instances appeared to be staged in ways that were interpreted in more definite ways.

Carl [Long-Length, IPP] and Tobias referred to the practice of 'soundclashing' wherein younger prisoners would play their music in a loud and directed way in order to out-do each other in volume and choice of music. As Shaun suggested, practices such as these derived from the

Caribbean 'Soundsystem' culture which had arrived in London in the 1960's. He described how this competitive and status driven mentality derived from clashes between groups of soundsystem operators:

Yeah cos we grew up with that Soundsystem, innit? And that Soundsystem is brash and loud and in-your-face, and "listen to my quality!" and "listen to my b-line"¹²! My b-line's the best, my boxes are the best! My hi-hats are the best! My DJ's the best! My music's the best!" It's all like, geared to somebody listening and taking it all in. **(Shaun)**

Shaun's account demonstrates a clear affinity between the role of music in urban 'street' cultures and that of the prison, and is illustrative of the ways in which music was intertwined within the communal aspects of life within the prison. His description of walking down a high-street in a British-Caribbean populated area of London and hearing music being played from numerous angles bore similarity to the description of the spur during association by other respondents. The comparison illustrates the role that music played as a means of creating small pockets of interaction in communal areas and can also be considered in terms of 'staging' affective atmospheres (Bille et al. 2015). That is, while music played a key role in highlighting and exacerbating existing cultural divisions within the social life of the prison, music also allowed for forms of inclusion and engagement in ways that cut through the divisions described in the opening sections of this chapter. Steve emphasised the diversity of his landing referring to a cross-section of ages, religions, and races which constituted his immediate neighbours and described how this group would gather during association to listen to a radio which he would bring out onto the landing. Steve [Long-Length, Early-Stage] described feeling 'comfortable' with those around him and described the mutual respect which he and his associates had developed over the course of their sentences.

You don't take things out of each other's cell, you don't take the piss, you don't bang and holler out the windows all night keeping everyone up, don't bang your door at certain times, and, if the doors shut you don't walk into people's cell, they might be having a sleep. So there's a nice little understanding, and then we'll come out and everyone's quite respectful to each other on the landing...I like it. **(Steve)**

Steve described a calm and convivial atmosphere that derived in part from the sense of stability which this group enjoyed explained how this would sometimes attract other prisoners to

¹² The 'b-line' refers to the low frequencies of a soundsystem. A high quality b-line will produce high volume without distorting and soundsystem, feeding into the competitive dynamic of soundsystem culture.

their

spot.

Music played an important role in structuring this space and the group would often listen to Magic FM which plays popular music from the 80's and 90's. Steve described how the songs from this particular timeframe would resonate with the younger members of the group who would approach the group to reminisce about their parents' musical practices. He explained, "I think it might have reminded them of their mums and dads, I really do. I think it reminded them of their elders, and I think that might have struck a little chord." As the previous sections have shown, age represented a barrier for many prisoners and older prisoners tended to be wary of young Londoners. However, as Steve suggested, the stabilisation or 'staging' of a particular atmosphere allowed this barrier to be crossed in some instances with the music providing an inviting feature that attuned the affective experience of the space towards familiar, comfortable and nostalgic mood. Furthermore, music served to heighten the affective intensity of the space around which the prisoners were gathered providing a point of focus that spatialised the gathering whilst still remaining open to others.

6.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has shown how music constitutes a significant influence on the daily lives of residents at HMP South Hill, structuring cultural and inter-personal relations that extend beyond the walls of the prison. While much more research is needed to understand the role of rap and black vernacular cultures within the prison, the focus on these features has provided data to illuminate the role of race and regionality within the cultural life of the prison. The role of urban cultures are of particular note and music provides an important feature through which to understand the ways in which urban life comes to be imported and adapted into the prison.

Rap music constitutes a significant feature of prison life, particularly for young people, and this expressive form provides resources through which young people are able to collectively construct ideas, and values around the self within the distinctly complex social environment that they inhabit. While music has been shown to provide important discursive resources for constructing individual and collective identities, the collective life of the prison is also expressed through the sensory and affective dimensions of the prison and in order to fully understand the cultural life of the prison it is important to explore this further. As we can see, music enables forms

of relationality which we may not ordinarily perceive due to their vague, indirect, and fleeting nature. However, these atmospheric forms illustrate important features of the collective and cultural life of the prison, illustrating further how residents inhabited their collective space. Furthermore, the use of music here illustrates a further continuity between urban culture and the prison and illustrates the spatial and acoustic dimension of culture. For those growing up in inner-London areas, where Caribbean cultural forms constituted part of the sensory and affective nature of urban life, the use of music as a means of spatialised mood and broadcasting was a familiar feature. This chapter has shown the ways in which culture, space, and emotion become entwined in various ways, creating a distinctly complex and permeable environment through the collective practices of those who resided within it.

Chapter 7

Concluding Discussion

The study has been oriented around the parts of prison life of which existing research has not provided in-depth empirical description. It has aimed to understand the context in which music contributes to the experience of imprisonment in as inclusive a way as possible, acknowledging the limitations inherent to a quasi-ethnographic investigation such as this. The accounts throughout the preceding chapters have sought to retain the vitality of the voices of my respondents and, to the greatest extent possible, to understand their individual ontologies in a way which goes beyond their current frame. By fixing the focus of this investigation on musical practices, parts of the daily life of the prison have become open to investigation in ways which build on existing research, and in some instances provide new avenues of investigation.

Due to the shortage of empirical data on this area, exploration has been the principal mode of enquiry throughout this process and for this reason the research has sought incorporate a wide range of analytical frames in order to make sense of the complex and heterogeneous mass of relations that constitute the daily life of the prison. Tim Ingold's (2010) concept of 'entanglement' has been an instructive metaphor throughout this investigation and the task of understanding music's role within the daily life of the prison has been akin to disentangling a dense mesh of differentiated threads. As the introductory passage sought to show, music is a distinctly embedded feature of the prison and its tendency to be threaded into the social, affective, material, and institutional life of the prison like a complex and interwoven root structure may explain in part how music has endured within spaces of confinement.

Furthermore, the thesis has sought to decentre the prison as the principal frame of analysis, conceptualising the institution as a meeting point of relations (or threads) rather than a discreet and bounded place. A key finding in this regard has been the way that music enacts forms of continuity between inside and outside, adding further support to Baer and Ravneberg's (2008) claim as to the non-binary nature of these spatial distinctions. As chapter 6 suggested this 'permeability' is evidenced in the ways in which subjects related to themselves and others, with

music providing an important vehicle by which prisoners related themselves to the outside in various ways.

The underlying assumption of this thesis has been that music and environment are causally connected and the preceding chapters have illustrated this in various ways. The closest thing to a distinct role which we might attribute to music within the prison is as a reflexive interface between self and environment, and as Chapters 4 and 5 showed, music provided a tool for stabilising and disrupting the dynamic relationship between the prisoners, staff, and the places in which they resided. These practices took various forms and it is in music's flexibility as an agency that we might posit a secondary reason for music's endurance within spaces of confinement. The following sections consider the research questions outlined in chapter 2 in more detail before considering some limitations of the research and areas for future study.

7.1 Research Questions

How does music help prisoners adapt to the challenges of late-modern imprisonment?

A consistent theme throughout the research has been the unpredictability of life for prisoners at HMP South Hill and this theme underscored some of the distinctly painful aspects of imprisonment. The high rates of churn as well as the constant fear of re-location constituted part of the day-to-day feelings of tension and contingency, forcing residents to undertake particular forms of adaptation to mitigate the profound effects of this feature of the environment. Unable to settle into rhythms, soundscapes, and social patterns of the prison, many were forced into defensive postures that required them to 'mask' certain feelings and instincts and perform rigid masculine 'fronts' (Laws & Crewe, 2016). In the face of this unpredictable and untrusting social environment, these performances required prisoners to maintain a stable and consistent sense of self, responding to challenges, affrays, and oversights with a willingness to resort to violence. Perhaps more fundamentally, the short-term nature of life within HMP South Hill prevented many residents from, in Steve's (40's, Long-Length, Early-Stage) terms, 'laying and roots'. The increasingly unpredictable character of the prison was, as Crewe (2011) argues, in part a feature of design and institutional features such as psychological evaluation and the IEP scheme served to underpin the feelings of uncertainty that lay at the heart of prison life at HMP South Hill.

Crewe (2011) argues that prison has become 'materially more comfortable' over the past century but due to the shift in the configuration of power they remain 'psychologically harmful' (p.524). The experience of the late-modern prison, Crewe argues, is determined by a 'tightening' of institutional power as systems of surveillance, evaluation, and control have taken over from the 'severe', violent, and physically painful systems of punishment which characterised the first half of the 20th century. These claims have engendered a renewed focus on the 'psychological pains of imprisonment' (Sykes, 1958) in prison research but have resulted in the physical and material conditions of imprisonment being under-theorised as they relate to the question of adaptation. As the previous chapters showed, confinement can lead to instances of pronounced psychological distress; however, these instances are neither caused, nor experienced, in a discretely 'psychological' way. The conceptual blurring between physical and psychological pain described in the previous accounts illustrates how these feelings are intrinsically connected with the physical discomfort derived from environmental conditions such as under-stimulation and constrained movement. Just as physical pain can have long-lasting psychological effects, so can psychological pain be experienced in visceral ways (Lieberman, 2003; Kross et al, 2011) and this should lead us to question any accounts that too rigidly enforce the dualism between mind and body with regard to the experience of imprisonment. As the previous chapters shown, both the psychological and physical pains of imprisonment, as well as the strategies used to mitigate them, are closely bound together.

Chapter 4 sought to illustrate extent to which goods and services underpin many of the strategies by which prisoners regulate their emotions by looking in detail at the pains of confinement. In prison, access to music is fraught due to its role within the institutional mechanisms of coercion and control. As a result, prisoners are often unable to reliably establish durable means of regulating their emotions. Drug use, self-harm, and other practices which can ultimately disadvantage prisoners become principal means of coping with the long periods of confinement as other sources of 'asylum' (DeNora, 2013) are rendered almost entirely unattainable by the economic and institutional structures. Conversely, for prisoners who are able to achieve reliable access to musical technologies or, through learning to write and perform music, relatively durable structures can be established that assist in managing these pains and achieving forms of 'ontological security' (2013p).

Music allowed prisoners to mitigate the distinct temporal and spatial pains of confinement through reflexively constructing their environment in ways which facilitated forms of both consistency and contrast to the stultifying and bare environment of the cell. More generally, as

chapter 5 showed, music enabled the construction of forms of consistency in response to the social dynamics of the prison, constructing the self as a stable entity in response to the complex social dynamics of the prison and the social and cultural forms with which it overlapped (Chapter 6). While many of these practices can be characterised as 'coping' responses which seek short term 'removal' (Goffman, 1961) of discomfort and strain, the distinction between 'coping' and 'adaptation' in these accounts is not always clear.

The concept of adaptation has tended to be focussed on the ways in which prisoners alter themselves in response to their environment (Toch & Adams, 1977). However, this configuration overlooks the mutually constitutive relationship between the self and environment, situating the capacity to effect durable changes on a purely subjective level. As such, I wish to argue here that in a distinctly unpredictable environment, in which prisoners are required to construct themselves in ways that often seem distant from the durable features of the self, it is objects and their capacity to effect changes in self and environment that play an increasingly important role in establishing bases on which the self can be enacted and performed in a consistent sense. This is not to say that the self has no durable properties, but rather that memories, feelings, and discourses of the self that are characterised in this way, are often most easily accessed in the context of the prison via aesthetic technologies such as radios and cd-players (as well as books, televisions etc.). Music is far from a solve all strategy to these pains of imprisonment in itself and, as we have seen, it is only in combination with range of other agencies, human and non-human, that it is able to exert agency over environment and self. However, it is, as DeNora (2000) suggests, music's capacity to bring together the material with the deeply emotional allows us to conceptualise the practices of coping and adaptation in different ways.

DeNora (2013) contrasts 'removal' with the concept of 'refurnishing', distinguishing the latter by reference to its capacity to effect durable environmental change. The examples throughout the previous chapters provide instances of refurnishing where forms of subjective, inter-subjective, and material agencies are brought together to engender ways of being within the prison that can be understood as durable. While music can articulate the profoundly durable features of the self or help construct the self and identity in new ways, this work relies on access to material resources in the form of musical technologies. While much of the day-to-day construction of self can be conceptualised in terms of coping, decisions to buy or borrow a radio in order to assist in these practices appear to rely on the desire to enact durable relations between the self and one's environment. Toch's concept of the 'niche' is instructive here and describes an assemblage of human and non-human relations to construct a sense of 'familiarity in the face of

threatening novelty'. The construction of a niche is described as a "long slow process of controlling, eliminating, and reducing noxious stimuli and of gathering and harvesting resources that facilitate 'doing time' (1977:185)". While Toch relegates the niche to the question of 'survival' and hence coping, I wish to argue here that the 'slow process' of 'gathering resources', can be thought of as part of an ongoing process of adaptation by rendering one's environment, and therefore self, familiar, stable and predictable. George's example from section 4.3.2 illustrates this interweaving between self and environment, illustrating the capacity of aesthetic objects to act as durable materials. George (30's, Long-Length) had been moved 17 times in his sentence, and he described the role his possessions played in ensuring consistency across locations, explaining "if one day they come to my door and they say "pack your stuff, you're leaving". The next place I get to, I'm ok. That's how I make sure I'm ok." George's account illustrates the ways in which the individuals use objects to create stable relations between themselves and their environment affording the self to be constructed in certain ways. For George, objects were continuous with attitudes, inter-subjective relations, and ways of being within the environment.

Like, yeah, I always make sure...the first things I always take care of. Because, I can't say it's a routine, but I've been in prison for a long time, long periods of time, I'm used to knowing the system and knowing how to have things and how to maintain...do you understand what I'm trying to say? Some people don't understand how to maintain their things? For instance somebody might smoke weed or smoke spice, or take some form of drug, or need burn or need something for somebody and might give their items up to gain something. I'd never do that. There's nothing no one in this jail could offer me for my property, if I was leaving prison and I wanted to give somebody my property or I wanted to sell my property, then that's cool. But while I'm serving and I need something, I'd never in my wildest dreams give it away for something else. Where a lot of people would. Do you understand? So, even people who love their music, they love something else more sometimes do you understand what I'm trying to say? And it's not just I love my music, it's because I love my things.

(George, 30's, Long-Length, Late-Stage)

By constructing durable values in relation to his possessions, George was, in turn, better able to maintain these values by using his media technologies to mitigate the profound transience of prison life and creating a 'niche' (Toch, 1977) in each prison he was moved to. Conversely, where George sought to regulate his immediate environment to the greatest extent, Harvey (20's, Mid-Length) sought to distance himself from it, sharply rejecting the idea that it was his 'home'.

People [have] come into the cell going, "oh you aint got no bedsheets", they've looked at the sink and they've gone, "how do you live like this?" "Geeze, this is prison yeah? Don't start questioning how I'm living because I'm not living, this is not my home. Okay? This is a temporary pit-stop. If you wanna class your little cell your home, and you wanna clean it up spick and span- do that mate. Don't judge me on the prison cell that I'm in.

(Harvey, 20's, Mid Length, Early-Stage)

While the attitudes underlying these cases are distinct, they both illustrate the extent to which self and environment are bound together. Harvey's comparative material poverty constituted, to some extent, his feelings of alienation from his environment, and reinforced his sense of dislocation from his preprison self. While it was not his lack of access to familiar songs, clothes, and other meaningful comforts that can be said to have *caused* Harvey's attitude of separation from his environment, it is clear that his attitude is constructed by a reflexive mediation between his objective circumstance and his existing concerns (Archer 2003 cited in Crewe et al. 2020). Actor-Network Theory (Latour, 2005) advances the argument that researchers should not privilege the agency of human actors over objects, suggesting instead that we should be attentive to the relations between people and objects in order to explore the types of action that come into effect through these relations.

In the discourse on adaptation in prisons, there is a tendency towards anthropocentrism; that is, the privileging of subjective 'priorities' or dispositions, over the 'objective circumstances' in which one finds oneself. This view has perhaps arisen due to the materially deprived conditions of imprisonment which forces prisoners to rely to a greater extent on strategies of 'psychological survival' (Cohen and Taylor, 1972). However, as we have seen throughout the preceding chapters, the prison is populated by objects and commodities whose presence takes on a greater significance in relation to the contingent properties of the environment. As I have sought to show, music plays an important role in the construction of self in relation to one's environment, and the durable 'priorities' (Archer 2003, in Crewe et al. 2020) and dispositions which are thought to underpin adaptive stances are, according to Latour (2005) only meaningful in their capacity to be enacted. I suggest that it is only through materials such as music technologies that we are able to construct the self in consistent ways and thus engage in processes of 'deliberation' (Archer 2003 in Crewe et al. 2020). By emphasising the relations between humans and objects, we can conceptualise adaptation as an interweaving of the self within an environment and, as such, are better able to empirically account for the threads that lead people to feel, to a greater or lesser extent, stable and secure within the highly contingent environment of the local prison.

What is the role of music in the collective and cultural life of the prison?

The power of music to act as a bridge between the 'public and private' (Hesmondhalgh, 2013) remained an important feature in this study, despite the complex and often restrictive character of inter-personal relations within the local prison. Crucially, music acted as a way of making the private experience of music public in various ways, creating the basis for relation between cellmates, residents, and staff in various instances. However, music also demarcated lines of exclusion, acting as an important basis within the cultural life of the prison. The capacity for music to create trusting relationships must be tempered with its character as a social and cultural signifier, constituting some of the cleavages between particular demographics within in the prison.

The exploration of Drill in chapter 6 illustrates the capacity for music to act as the basis for cultural affiliation, however, in exploring the practices and attitudes that underpin these affiliations, we see evidence of the forms of cultural 'work' referred to by Stuart Hall (1975) and Paul Willis (1978). Here music was a tool for creating collective identities through a creative and, crucially, *critical* process of construction. As shown in chapters 5 and 6, music, both consumed and performed, acted as a way of constructing one's self in relation to others by drawing on a range of discourses within which to situate one's self. For young black men in particular, these practices were oriented around negotiating the complex overlapping between the prison and 'on road'. In concordance with Bramwell's (2018) findings, the practices of rap that underpinned much of this cultural affiliation illustrated the 'adaptation' of black vernacular culture to the demands of the late modern prison. In these respects, music offered a way of managing the complexity of collective life, mitigating some of the constraints over the ways in which prisoners and staff were required to interact with each other.

Here, the character of music as a vehicle for sensations, feelings, emotions, and ideas allowed the forms of culture from outside the prison to permeate and become part of the daily life of the prison, albeit in an adapted form. As the concluding section of chapter 6 showed music also provided a means by which forms of feeling and emotion could be experienced collectively. The features of forced cohabitation and the 'compression' of space (Handcock and Jewkes, 2012:617) underpin a range of unique spatial and affective characteristics which force prisoners into relation with each other. Here the relation between public and private space becomes

increasingly fluid and music provides a vehicle by which relations were structured despite the cellular arrangement of space within the prison. The concept of 'atmosphere' relates to the spatialization of mood or affect and Reidel's (2015) work illustrates the ways in which music can create atmospheric intensities, drawing individuals together in collective feelings. Aside from Turner and Peter's (2015) exploration of atmospheres of imprisonment in museums, this feature of prison life has yet to be examined and the findings in section 6 illustrate the importance of these moments of affective intensity in articulating sentiments which are often left unsaid.

De Boise (2015) refers to the capacity of music to enable conversations with men about emotions in ways which gendered norms around emotional disclosure and expression may otherwise prohibit. This is particularly pronounced within the hyper-masculine environment of the prison where social life is determined by concerns about risk (Ricciardelli et al. 2015) and status, and security (Jewkes, 2005). One of Gresham Sykes (1958) most famous lines was from a prisoner in New Jersey who stated, "The worst thing about prison is you have to live with other prisoners" (p77). This pervasive view of the prisoner's social life as based on instrumental and manipulative relations (Toch & Adams, 1989) or as prone to violence (Sim, 1994; Hassine, 1999) has, as Crewe et al. (2014) suggest lead to a portrayal of the prison as akin to Hobbes' (Cited in Crewe et al. 2014) 'state of nature'. While violence and predation are part of the daily life of the prison, Crewe et al. (2014) argue that to view this as a totalising frame obscures the dynamism of the 'emotional geography' of the prison. Along these lines, the previous chapters have shown how music can provide profound moments of collective feeling that cut through the alienated atmosphere of the prison to instil profound feelings of collective humanity amongst prisoners and staff. As Liebling states "[a]ll variations on human behaviour – from compassion and wisdom to abuse and life-threatening violence – are observable, or implicit, in the daily round of events [in prison]" (1999:152). In this way, music provides an interrogative tool to explore areas of the affective life of the prison which tend too often to remain 'implicit'.

7.2 Practical Implications and Suggestions

The research supports a number of practical suggestions for Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service relating to the provision of music in prisons. As the findings suggest music constituted an important means for the majority of both prisoner and staff respondents to undertake important forms 'emotional regulation' (DeNora, 2000; Gross, 2014). In the face of a

distinctly stressful situation music provides a means of managing feelings of anxiety, loneliness, and distress. As existing research has highlighted (Jacobson et al. 2007; HMIP, 2015), these feelings are most acute for newcomers to prison for whom the pains of dislocation are heightened by the lack of effective 'technologies of the self' (DeNora, 2000:46) through which to undertake the reflexive management of mood. As the findings suggest, newcomers tend to endure greater deprivation than others in their initial months as access to music technologies as well as other durable avenues for emotional regulation require careful saving and investment through the licit economy of the prison or access to often considerable funds through the illicit economy. While access to music technologies can be fraught for prisoners across various points along their sentence, it is clear that this lack of access is felt most intensely for those in their first months. The distinct character of the local estate may also serve to amplify these issues of access as the short-term nature of life within these prisons may preclude prisoners from accessing work and education which, in addition to providing stimulation and time out of one's cell, also serve as means of accumulating the funds required to access radios, stereos, and CD's. For these reasons the findings support the extension of access to music for prisoners beyond the Prison Radio and that which is available via the canteen so that it is accessible to prisoners regardless of their material wealth within the prison.

While the Prison Radio Association does vital work in providing access to music (as well as drama and documentary) for prisoners in a universal manner, the findings suggest that the inability to access specific music in a reliable manner can inhibit the ability to self-regulate. With the increasing importance of digital technology within the prison there is an opportunity to consider music in the way that many prisoners already did, as a universal right by providing the ability for prisoners to stream music in their cells. As Nathan [30's, Long-Length, Late-Stage] suggested, the reliance on physical and analogue technologies such as CD-Players and radios to provide access to music may run into issues in the coming years as the popularity of the CD as a medium wanes and commercial production ceases. The freedom of access to music that those outside of the prison enjoy pales in comparison to the patchy, inconsistent, and outdated modes access that prisoners are afforded, yet this need not be the case. Universal access to music streaming could provide access to important resources for the most vulnerable prisoners to mitigate the most painful and distressing features of imprisonment, making practices such as self-harm and drug use less viable prospects. Furthermore, for less vulnerable prisoners, access to music in this way could, as I have argued above, provide an important basis for adaptation and the construction/re-construction of self.

7.3 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

As the findings suggest, a clear area for future research is the role of objects or 'things' (Ingold, 2010) within the daily life of the prison. The relatively narrow focus on media technologies in Chapter 4 has illustrated how the relations between people and things come to structure the daily life of the prison in various ways. In many ways, the largest shifts within the late-modern prison over the past decades have occurred alongside the shifting topography of objects within the prison. Both the influx of drugs (Crewe 2005) as well as the IEP Scheme (Liebling 1999) are said to have created new relational dynamics between prisoners and staff and, as the previous sections have shown, these dynamics continue to shift in response to the materials. Having undermined the old institutions of Sykes' (1958) and Clemmer's (1961) 'inmate code,' as well as the dependability of traditional forms of authority, it is perhaps more important than ever to begin exploring the ways in which prisoners have sought to cope with this contingency. While drugs provide a destabilising force in many respects, other objects such as music technology, crafts, books, and television provide important resources for the practices by which prisoners establish feelings of stability. As such, these objects deserve to be explored on their own terms, rather than as an outcome of shifts in the management and culture of prisoners. The 'deprivation of goods and services' (Sykes, 1958) constitutes a central component of the prison's capacity to punish and the frequent alarmism of the tabloid press (Campbell, 2018) about the material comforts allowed to prisoners illustrates the ideological dimension of systems such as IEP. In order to punish, the prevailing perspective appears to be that prisoners must be materially more deprived by an unspecified margin than the wider society. It is not within the scope of this project to explore this relationship in the detail required, however, I wish to suggest here that this mentality towards goods wherein they are considered part of both the prison's punitive and coercive mechanisms overlooks the increasing significance of aesthetic practices in the regulation of the self. By denying prisoners of access to music, particularly during the early stages of imprisonment where anxiety is felt most intensely, the inability to self-regulate is diminished in many cases leading to increased feelings of distress and frustration. In many respects, these challenges are particularly pronounced within local prisons where cellular confinement constitutes a larger feature of the regime (HMIP, 2019). In this respect, further research in a different category and type of prison may reveal emphasis on a different range of practices to reflect the response to a different range of challenges.

The findings relating to prison staff also merit further examination and the role music as a means of emotional regulation here illustrates interesting dynamics. These findings point to the challenges experienced by staff and, while the role of music is important here, a more systematic means of ensuring that front line workers are able to undertake their work in fair and consistent ways must be found. The findings have illustrated that musical practices can differ in various ways across age, region, and ethnicity, however, an area which was not explored within this study was that of gender. Aside from the two female members of staff interviewed, this study was confined to the experiences of men. As de Boise (2015) suggests, music is experienced and manifested in gendered ways and, as such, further research should explore the ways in which music is used by female prisoners and staff.

Additionally, future research could look further at the role of music performance within the daily life of the prison, exploring how performance constitutes cultural forms in more detail. An overlooked aspect of this research has been the role of the music technology class within these cultures and the ways in which concepts of opportunity and aspiration were constructed through composition and performance. Where this thesis has sought to turn its focus away from formalised music activities, it is clear that these are not discrete from the daily life of the prison. For those on the VP wing, for instance, access to the choir was amongst the few opportunities they had to undertake purposeful activity outside of the ordinary regime and, as such, this formalised activity had deep sociological impact on their lives. As such, future research may seek to explore the interaction of interventions such as these with other musical cultures within the prison. The thesis has demonstrated that the role of music within the prison should not be confined to questions of reoffending and it is hoped that some of these findings outlined in this thesis may inform those wishing to undertake music interventions in future.

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Film:

Jailhouse Rock (1957), Dir: Thorpe, Richard. MGM

Music:

Headie One, RV (2018) *Intro*, The One, Prod: M1OnTheBeat

Joey Bada\$\$ (2015) *Piece of Mind*, B4.DA.\$\$, Prod: Joey Bada\$\$, Jonny Shipes

Kodak Black (2019) *Freestyle From Jail*, Available at
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Rakim (1990) *In the Ghetto*, Let the Rhythm Hit 'Em, Prod: Paul C, Large Professor

Albums:

Johnny Cash (1968) *At Folsom Prison*, Prod: Johnston, Bob, Columbia Records

Johnny Cash (1968) *At San Quentin*, Prod: Johnston, Bob, Columbia Records

John Martyn (1973) *Solid Air*, Prod: John Martyn, John Wood

Appendix 1

Participant Information Sheet

Study: Exploring the significance of music in the daily lives of prisoners

I would like to invite you to take part in a research project. Before you decide, please read this sheet, it will explain why the research is being done and what it will involve for you. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and please feel free to ask any questions to me in person or via my contact information overleaf.

What will happen to me if I take part?

You will be asked to participate in a one-to-one interview with the researcher. This will last for about one hour and will take place in the prison. The researcher will ask you questions about how and why you listen to music.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose is to find out how people benefit from being able to listen to music and what it means to them in their daily lives. The study will also try to find out how music can help people deal with their sentences, and how it can be managed to maximise the benefits and reduce disturbance for others.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

Yes. The researcher is based at Royal Holloway, University of London and is not employed by the prison. All of the information you give will be anonymised so that

those reading reports from the research will not know who has contributed to it. The answers you provide will not impact your sentence and will not be shared with anyone within the prison.

Your responses will be kept secure with your signed consent form stored separately from the responses you provide so that no one can match up your responses to yourself. Data will be stored securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998).

Do I have to take part?

No, you do not have to participate. You can withdraw at any time and may do so without giving a reason. Following the interview you have up to two months following the date of your interview to withdraw from the study if you wish to. If you do take part, you do not have to answer any question put to you and do not need to give any reason for your decision not to do so.

What are the risks and benefits?

You may feel uncomfortable, distressed or worry answering some sensitive questions. Please feel free to discuss these concerns with the researcher. However, you are free to withdraw from the study at any stage.

By taking part in this study, you may find it beneficial talking to someone who is not part of the prison, education, or healthcare staff. Your answers will also help to improve the access to and management of music for others who come to the prison.

Contact details of researcher and supervisor

Student Researcher

Chris Waller

Supervisors

Professor David Denney and Dr Richard Smith

Royal Holloway University of London

Egham Hill

Egham, Surrey

RG15

0EX

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet, please keep this for reference and to contact us with any queries.

Appendix 2

Consent Form

Title

Researcher: Chris Waller

- ☐ I voluntarily agree to take part in this study

- ☐ I have read and understood the Information Sheet provided. I have been given a full explanation by the researcher of the nature, purpose, location and likely duration of the study, and of what I will be expected to do.

- ☐ I have been given the opportunity to ask questions on all aspects of the study and have understood and been satisfied with the information given as a result.

- ☐ I understand that all personal data relating to volunteers is held and processed in the strictest confidence, and in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). I agree that I will not seek to restrict the use of the results of the study on the understanding that my anonymity is preserved.

- ☐ I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time by contacting the researcher or the supervisor (details on the information sheet) without needing to justify my decision and without prejudice. Withdrawing from the study will not have an adverse impact.

- ☐ I agree to being contacted again by the researcher or associated researcher for further questions relating to this study or for follow-up information at a later date. This might involve clarifying answers or being asked to take part in other research.
- ☐ I understand that behaviours which are deemed to be against prison rules and can be adjudicated against (see Section 51 of the Prison Rules 1999), illegal acts, and behaviour that is harmful (e.g. intention to self-harm or complete suicide) may be disclosed to NOMS.
- ☐ I confirm that I have read and understood the above and freely consent to participating in this study. I have been given adequate time to consider my participation and agree to comply with the instructions and restrictions of the study.

Name of participant

Signed

Date

Name of researcher

Signed

Date

Appendix 3

Recruitment Form:

Exploring the significance of music in the daily lives of prisoners

I would like to invite you to take part in a research project. The purpose is to find out how people benefit from being able to listen to music and what it means to them in their daily lives. The study will also try to find out how music can help people deal with their sentences, and how it can be managed to maximise the benefits and reduce disturbance for others.

You do not have to participate and you can withdraw at any time and may do so without giving a reason.

You will be asked to participate in a one-to-one interview with the researcher. This will last for about one hour and will take place in the prison. The researcher will ask you questions about how and why you listen to music.

The researcher is based at Royal Holloway, University of London and is not employed by the prison. All of the information you give will be anonymised so that those reading reports from the research will not know who has contributed to it. The answers you provide will not impact your sentence and will not be shared with anyone within the prison.

If you would like to participate tick the box on the left. If you would like more information tick the box on the right and the researcher will come and see you. Please leave your completed forms out under your doors and the researcher will come and

collect them. If you would like to participate please enter you PIN under the tick boxes, this will help me to find you.

I would like to participate in the research
information

☐

I would like more

☐

PIN: _____

Appendix 4

Interview Schedule:

1. **Biographic:**

Could you tell me a bit about your life before you were sentenced?

Where are you from?

What was it like growing up there?

2. **Current Conditions:**

What are the biggest differences between then and now?

What sorts of things do you do when you're bored?

3. **Music:**

What do you listen to, why that music?

How do you listen to it?

What do you do when you listen to it?

When do you listen to it?

What does it make you feel?

4. **Social Life:**

Do you listen to any music with other people?

Where do you do that?

5. **Closing:**

Have you discovered any new music since coming here?

Is there any music that you wished you had?

Appendix 5

